

# QURRA OF EGYPT

*By:*

*Maulana Qari Abdullah Is haq*



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## **PREFACE**

By

Hadhrat Qari Ismail Essack Saheb  
(Head of Tajweed & Qira'at At Darul-Uloom Azzadville).

The Qur'ân, when recited has an overwhelming effect on the heart. A person is attracted and drawn towards the reader. Hence, if together with recitation there is a beautiful voice, the beauty of the Qur'ân is enhanced and the people are drawn even closer to it. It is for this reason that Nabî-e-Karîm ﷺ said;

زَيَّنُوا الْقُرْآنَ بِأَصْوَاتِكُمْ

Beautify the Qur'ân through your voices

Answering the query, regarding the person who recites with a beautiful voice to impress others as being boastful, Hadhrat Muftî Jamîl Ahmâd Thânwî رَحِمَهُ اللهُ answers;

- If the intention is name, fame and honour, it will be classified as ostentatiousness and being showy, which is not permitted in Sharî'ah.
- If the intention is to gain reward and proximity to Allâh ﷻ and to expound the greatness of the Qur'ân, then this is desired.
- If it is for show, but the intention is to bring joy to the listeners, this too is permissible.
- If the intention is to create in the heart of the listener the magnificence of the Qur'ân, to build in a person the yearning and closeness towards the Qur'ân, so that a person is always focused towards it, and has the desire to recite the Qur'ân correctly with a beautiful voice, which is applauded in Sharî'ah. To recite with the above intentions, in a beautiful voice is not bragging, but rather desired in the Sharî'ah.

Shaikh Abdul Bâsit was once asked as to how he inspires the people with his recitation. He replied that why should it not be so, if the reciter reads from the heart directly towards the heart of the listener.

Maulânâ Yûsuf Binnorî رَحِمَهُ اللهُ once commented regarding the recitation of Shaikh Abdul Bâsit, 'Though his facial appearance was not compatible to the Sharî'ah, the nûr of the Qur'ân is found in his heart.'

It is in this regard that this book has been compiled, whereby the reader could acknowledge and appreciate the efforts the Qurrâ undergo in promoting the Qur'ân

Qârî Abdullah Is'haq has done a sterling job in presenting the biographies of the most famous Qârî's of our time. The reader will be inspired to emulate these great personalities and recite the Qur'ân as it ought to be read, and to appreciate the recitations of the Qurrâ, bringing one closer to the Qur'ân.

May Allah ﷻ accept this effort and reward the compiler accordingly, and make the book a means of advancing and promoting the treasures of the Qur'ân all over the world. May Allâh ﷻ fill the Quboor of all the Qurrâ with His special nûr and grant them lofty stages in the Hereafter. Âmîn.

(Qârî) Ismail Essack

Madrasah Arabia Islamia

22 Dhul Qa'dah 1426 / 24 December 2005



## PREFACE

By

**Hadrat Qari Abdur Rauf Bulandshehri Saheb**  
(Ustaad of Tajweed & Qira'at at Darul-Uloom Deoband).

Indeed very famous and blessed are those who have been chosen by Allah ﷻ for learning and teaching the Glorious Qur'ân, or have been chosen for the service of the Glorious Qur'aan in any way, and have given up their lives for this. It is such people who are being referred to in the following verse of the Glorious Qur'aan;

ثم أورثنا الكتاب الذين اصطفينا من عبادنا

There is a famous saying;

أنزل القرآن في العرب، وقرء في مصر، وفهم في الهند

The last portion of this saying may be exaggerated, but the first two parts are an accepted reality and fact. No country in the world can produce a parallel to the great services rendered to the Glorious Qur'ân which the Ulama and Qurra of Egypt have done (and are doing) as far as Tajweed, Qiraat and spreading of the Glorious Qur'ân is concerned.

The land of Egypt bore innumerable great individuals and authorities, in front of whose in depth knowledge of the Glorious Qur'aan, the entire world has to bow down.

Upon hearing the astonishing recitations of these great individuals, many people accepted Islam. Their excellent tones and methods of recitation have become examples for those to follow.

From these great individuals are;

Qari Sheikh Muhammad Rifat, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq Al-Minshaawi, Sheikh Mahmood Ali al-Banna, Sheikh Abdul Basit Abdus Samad, Sheikh Ahamd Al-Ruzaiqi, Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood at-Tablawi, Sheikh Raaghib Mustafa Ghalwash and many other famous Egyptian Qurra.

خدا را رحمت کند این عاشقان پاک طینت را

May Allâh Ta'aala reward Muhtaram Qari Abdullah Is'haq abundantly who, due to his passionate interest and attachment to the Glorious Qur'aan, undertook a special journey to Egypt, met the Qurra and exclusively heard the Glorious Qur'aan directly from them. He also gathered their biographies and the biographies of many other Qurra as well.

نام نیک رفتگان صانع مکن تا بماند نام نیکت پائدار

He is publishing the biographies of certain Qurra under the name "احوال بعض قراء بلد النيل" for the benefit of the generations to come.

I have hope that this book will be a source of encouragement, and will be beneficial to those who have interest in the field.

I pray to Allâh Ta'aala to accept this work and use the author for the upliftment of Deen, and may He also grant him the Taufeeq (ability) to publish the biographies of the other Qurra as well in the future, Aameen.

*Khuwaidimul Qur'aan*

*Abdurrauf Bulandshehri*

*25 - Dhul Qa'dah - 1426.*

*Lecturer in the faculty of Tajweed and Qira'at  
Darul Uloom Deoband.*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Allâh Ta'aala had been merciful upon me that he granted me patrens like I have. From a very tender age we were nutured in a Quranic enviorenment. This how me and my brother, Qari Abdurrahman grew up with the love of the Qur'aan instilled in us. As we grew up with this intense love for the Glorious Quraan and the love of listening to it, we went into the field of studying the Quraan by firstly memorizing it, then learning its translation and meanings, and finally studying the science of Qiraat.

For this I am greatly thankful firstly to my parents, because as Rasululallah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam has said; **He who is not thankful to people, can never be thankful to Allah Ta'aala.** I thank my parents from the recesses of my heart for having given me the opportunity to acquire the most sublime knowledge, i.e. the knowledge of the Glorious Quraan. Then I am thankful to Allah ﷻ for making it easy for me to acquire this honourable knowledge.

I am also thankful to all my Asatiza (tutors) for imparting the knowledge of the Glorious Quraan to me. I would like to mention those who taught me the different sciences related to the Glorious Quraan;

MI. Haroon Memi Saheb, MI.Moosa Lorgat Saheb, Apaa Z.C. Ali, MI.AbdurRaheem Saheb, Hadhrat Hafiz AburRahman Mia Saheb, Qari Ismail Essack Saheb and Qari Yunus Desai Saheb.

I would also like to thank the following people;

1. My brother, Qari Abdurrahman, for his input and help in preparing this book, and with whom I share this 'Ni'mah' (bounty) of listening and enjoying Qira'aat.

2. Sheikh Ismail Londth, for his permission to copy some excerpts from his book titled, "Legends of Quraanic Recital - Sheikh "Abd al-Basit".

3. Qari Faisal Tickly and his sons, Hafiz Haneef and Tahir for giving me informatiom on the Minshawiyah Family.

4. Qari Mahmood Casoojee of Nigel for aiding in putting this work together as well as assisting me with useful information which benefitted me during my stay in Egypt. If it was not for him, it would have been difficult for me to meet many of the Qurra'.

5. Sheikh Mahmood Abdus Samee' (an Egyptian Alim) for his time and patience with me in Cairo.

6. Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville and Zam Zam publishers for publishing this book.

May Allah Ta'aala fulfill all their desires in this world and may he be pleased with them in the hereafter, AMEEN!

*Abu 'Ubaidullah Abdullah Is'haq.*





## INTRODUCTION

All praises are due to Allah ﷻ who has created us from that Ummah which was given the Glorious Quraan. Peace and salutation be upon our beloved Master, Muhammadur Rasululallah ﷺ, upon whom the Glorious Quraan was revealed. The Glorious Quraan is a book which is an embodiment of beauty, be it in recital, listening, looking at its script or by studying its translation and understanding its meanings. Every aspect of the Glorious Quraan is a beauty. And why should this not be so when it is the best of Books, revealed upon the best of all the Ambiyaa. In it are magnificent Surahs like Ya-seen, Ar-Rahman and Taha. Recitation of the Glorious Quraan, as well as listening to it is an 'Ibadaah (act of worship).

There are different ways and modes of recitation. Firstly, the quick pace of reading, as is common in Fajr and Taraweeh Salaah. This pace is known as **Hadar**. (The Arabs term this as; 'Tarteel'). Secondly, the medium pace of reading i.e., neither as fast as the above pace nor very slow as the following pace. This is known as **Tadweer**. Thirdly, the slow pace of reading, which is known as **Tarteel**, and commonly termed as 'Qiraat'. (Arabs term this mode as 'Tajweed' or 'Mujawwad'.) Generally, when we speak of Qiraat, it refers to the slow pace of reading, in which the Egyptians are experts. It is a fact that the Egyptian Qurra are amongst the best Qur'aanic reciters, and the Egyptian Qurra are *the* best reciters. Some may differ with this, because as Sheikh AbdulBasit R.A. mentioned that it is the choice of the listeners that differs. Some choose a particular Qari and love his reading while others prefer the reading of another Qari. Thus there could be difference in this.

My grandfather, Moulana Qari Zubair Ali R.A., his father Qari Zahoor Ali, his brother Qari Asghar Ali (may Allah Ta'aala fill their graves with Noor) and Qari Muzaffar Ali (who is still alive and lives in Pakistan) were all Qurra and recited in a very beautiful voice. Since we were young my respected mother (May Allah ﷻ grant her long life) used to play the reel recordings of Sheikh AbdulBasit and other Qurra in the house. So it was through these two channels that the love of the Glorious Quraan and the love to listen to it being recited beautifully was imbedded in our hearts and souls. For this I

express my Shukr to Allah ﷻ. I always had the desire to study the lives of the great Egyptian reciters, the likes of Sheikh Muhammad Al-Minshawi (whom I am a fan of, and in my opinion is "the-cream of the crop"), Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna and Sheikh AbdulBasit and the many others.

This desire was fulfilled when my younger brother, Qari Abdurrahman went to study in Cape Town and had the opportunity of meeting Sheikh Ismail Londth - who studied in Cairo and is one of the renowned Qurra of South Africa. He obtained a copy of "**Abaqiratut-Tilawati fil Qarnil Ishreen**" by Shukri al-Qadhi, from Sheikh Ismail. Later, in December 2003, when I had the opportunity of travelling to Cairo, I visited many of the Qurra. Amongst those that I met were Sheikh AbulAynayn Sha'eesha who was born in 1920, and is the oldest living Qari in Egypt, Sheikh Mahmood Siddiq al-Minshaawi, Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi, Sheikh Abdul Wahid Zaki Raadhi, Sheikh Jalaal Muhammad Mustafa, Sheikh Ali Najam 'Asaakir, Sheikh AbdulBasit Ismail, Sheikh Ahmad al-Banna, Qari Tariq AbdulBasit, Dr. Ahmad Na'eena, Sheikh Ahmad Hasan AbulFarj and many others. I met most of these Qurra at their homes where they welcomed me very warmly. When I visited Qari Tariq bin Sheikh AbdulBasit at his residence in Doqqi, he presented me with another book titled; "**Sufara-Ul-Quraan -- Part One**", by Ahmad Humam. Both these books, *Abaqiratut-Tilaawati fil Qarnil Ishreen* and *Sufara-Ul-Quraan* deal with the lives of the Egyptian Qurra'. The first book discusses the lives of forty two Qurra', while the second one discusses the lives of sixteen Qurra'. Reading these books was very inspiring and motivating. It also introduced us to many other Qurra' whom we were unaware of. It then occurred to me to prepare a book such as these in the English language for the benefit of those who do not know the Arabic language and are as passionate about (Egyptian) Qiraat as I am. Thus trusting in Allah ﷻ, I began working on this, and by His grace here it is.

May He make it beneficial to one and all. AMEEN!

Abu 'Ubaidullah Abdullah Is'haq.

1427 / 2006

Azaadville

South Africa



## TERMS COMMONLY USED IN THIS BOOK

**Munasabaat / Saharaat:** A function which is held with the suitability of the occasion, which we would call a JALSAH. Immaterial of the purpose.

**Hafalaat / Ihtifaal:** A gathering which is held to mark an important occasion such as Me'raaj, or the 15<sup>th</sup> night of Sha'baan etc. which could also be called a Jalsah.

**Maulid:** literally means 'birth.' This is of many types, Maulid-un-Nabi, which is commemorated widely and on a very large scale. Then there are the other birth occasions such as Maulidah Sayyidah Zainab, Maulidah Sayyidah Nafeesah, Maulidah Sayyidah Aysha, Maulid Sayyidina Husain Radiallahu Anhum and many others. Each of these gatherings begins with a recitation of the Glorious Quraan. The bigger the occasion, the greater the reciters. For example, if it is the Maulid-un-Nabi, and it is in one of the main Masaajid like Masjid Al-Husain or Masjid Zainab etc then the prominent and eminent Qurra are invited to recite.

**Ihyaa-ul-Layaali:** Literally means 'to enliven the nights.' In the Egyptian (and Arab) context it refers to enlivening a night by inviting a Qari to recite the Glorious Quraan. This could be for any reason. . . mostly it is done in the blessed month of Ramadhaan. It is also commonly done to celebrate any occasion and function, Islamic or non-Islamic. In the month of Ramadhaan, many Qurra' go abroad upon invitations from different countries, where their mission is "Ihyaa-ul-Layaali", to recite the Glorious Quraan in different Masaajid. Many of the Egyptian Kings also used to hire one or more Qurra for the entire month to recite before them in their palaces every night. Mention of this is made in the books of these Qurra'. For instance, in 1948 King Farooq the first hired Sheikh Mustafa Ismail and Sheikh AbulAynayn to recite for him every night at the 'Ra's-at-teen' palace! There are many other incidences like these.

**Ma'tam (plural: Ma'aatim):** A Memorial ceremony. It is an event where the bereaved family receives guests who come

to pay their respects. This event is held either at the home of the family or at a hall. Again, one or more Qurra are invited to read, and if the bereaved are a wealthy family, they would appoint one of the eminent Qaris, and the venue will also be an elite one.

When I was in Egypt in 2003, I had an opportunity to witness such a gathering. It was a Friday night the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, and the venue was Masjid Hamidiyyah Shazliyyah in Muhandiseen. The function is actually held in a hall adjacent to the Masjid. This is a venue which the wealthier families would use. This is also where the 'Zhikra' of Sheikh AbdulBasit is held annually. Anyway, the reciters on this night were Dr.Ahmad Na'eena and Sheikh Ahmad Hasan Abul-Faraj. The nature of these programmes is that these reciters read turn by turn, each reciting a 'Rub'a' (1/8th) of a Juz. The one who recites last ends off by reciting Surah Fatiha and makes the 'Tasdeeq', which could be termed as "the final Dua." Guests, who come to console the bereaved, sit and listen quietly to the recitation and depart. Then others will come, sit and depart . . . and this continues up to the end of the session.

**'Azaa':** Ceremony of mourning. It is same as the above gathering.

**Zhikra:** Literally means "Remembrance." it is held annually to mark the day of the passing away of a prominent person, Alim or Qari. For example the 'Zhikra' of Sheikh AbdulBasit is held annually on the date he passed away i.e., the 30<sup>th</sup> of November. Examples of non-Islamic functions are inaugurations of new buildings, schools and businesses. Official government sessions and functions often begin with the recitation of the Glorious Quraan.

The Glorious Quraan and its recitation is part and parcel of the Egyptians. They have a recitation at the beginning of almost all their events, whether it is to celebrate the opening of a Musjid, Madrasah or school, or to honour an official or distinguished guest, or to celebrate the birthday of a historical religious personality. ❁





No. 1

# المقرئ الكبير، الشيخ مصطفى إسماعيل

(رحمه الله)

Sheikh  
Mustafa Ismail

Rahimahullah



## SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMAIL رحمه الله

\*\*\*Most of the information on the life of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was extracted from a book authored by Kamal an-Najmi. It seems that Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il had written his own autobiography during his life time. The author, Kamal Najmi frequently quotes from there.

### BIRTH:

On the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1905, in the village of Meit-Ghazal, Santah, in the Western Province, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was born in a wealthy household which was known for their generosity and enthusiasm to serve the needy. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was brought up in Meit-Ghazal with his family, and under the supervision of his grandfather, Mursi Ibrahim Ismail.

The inhabitants of this village were generally involved in farming, but Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's father, Muhammad Mursi Ismail sent him to the Madrasah to memorize the Quraan and to educate him further.

### CHILDHOOD AND EARLY LEARNING DAYS

As a child it was known amongst his friends that he loved to play, and he specifically loved playing a game similar to hockey. He was a very stubborn child. At times he used to go away from people and seclude himself under a tree, and at that time he used to recite the Glorious Quraan in his sweet and beautiful young voice. At once people used to gather around him! He used to frequently go with his friends to functions to listen to the 'Munshideen' (singers) and it was from them that he picked up much of his talent.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il himself wrote the following;

"I was the first child born to my parents. Thereafter my fellow siblings follow in the following order; Zakiyyah, AbdusSalam, Ameenah, Muhammad, Fatimah, Sittul-Aylah, Sariyyah, AbdulAziz."



He mentions about his childhood; "Fortunately I spent my childhood under my parents and grandparents supervision who gave me a lot of love and affection to such an extent that I was pampered and spoilt. We were one big family which consisted of five uncles who were all married. We all lived in one big house."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's father disapproved of him to be in the environment of his friends, so he admitted him into the Madrasah of Sheikh Abdurrahman AbulAynayn which was in the village. He memorized a quarter of the Glorious Quraan and he also learnt to read and write within two years. Then he enrolled in the Madrasah of Sheikh Abdullah Shahatah, which was near his home. Here he completed the Quraan. From then he used to recite the Glorious Quraan and became famous for his recitals at the age of ten.

Once his paternal grandmother heard him reciting the Glorious Quraan in the house. She went out of her room and awoke her son-the father of the boy- and together they heard him reciting. After this she praised him and told the father to allow him to complete the studies of the Glorious Quraan and Tajweed. Muhammad Mursi consulted his old friend, Sheikh Abdurrahman AbulAynayn concerning this matter. The latter said to him, "O Muhammad, I have heard your son's voice and I foresee his future in the field of recitation of the Glorious Quraan." Thus his father sent him to study by Sheikh Muhammad Hasheesh and Sheikh Idrees Faakhir. Both these were Ulama and Ustaads of Tajweed and Qiraat in Meit-Ghazal. They agreed on a time to test the youngster. When they heard him, they were surprised and astonished with his recitation, and eagerly accepted his admission and began teaching him. Sheikh Muhammad Hasheesh disciplined his pupils with the stick, in order to point out right from wrong and also to make them learn their lesson.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il recalls those days and says; "Sheikh Muhammad Abu Hasheesh used to give us a particular type

of hiding which was called 'Falakah' He did us a great favour by making us learn the hifz of the Glorious Quraan. I remember once when I made a mistake in my lesson, he became very angry that he beat me on my shoulder until it bled. I went home and told my mother about this. She took some sand and placed it on the wound."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to learn his lesson till late in the night and used to read it to his teacher the following day. Thereafter, the youngster acquired the knowledge of Tajweed and Qiraat at the hands of Sheikh Idrees Faakhir. Sheikh Faakhir was a respected person in the village. He did not have a Maktab of his own, but used to oversee all the Makateeb of the area. When he heard the voice of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, he said that this is a pearl which needs to be taken good care of, and personally began paying attention to the education of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il mentioned in his talks; "Sheikh Faakhir used to check on us in the Maktab. I used to recite two paras (juz) to him at a time. He was very vigilant and never allowed a mistake to go by. Not only did he suffice on listening to me in the Maktab, but he used to make me walk with him in the streets and read the Glorious Quraan to him. Whenever I made a mistake, he would make me read from the very beginning saying; "يا ولد! ابدأ من الاول" (O boy, read from the start . . .)"

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il completed his studies of Tajweed and Qiraat and revised the Glorious Quraan by Sheikh Faakhir thirty times. In Ramadhaan, Sheikh Faakhir used to go to their house at nights with his son.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il says; "Once, his son read 1/4 of a para (juz). He then told me to read Surah Saad. I replied that Surah Saad is a lengthy Surah, O Ustaad. Then I read a portion from it. My household became very happy. At this time I was 12 years of age."



Neither did Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's father nor his grandfather think of sending him to the Deeni Institute in Tanta, where many of the boys of the area of al-Gharbiyyah enrolled annually until once when he accompanied his grandfather to visit someone who had taken ill in Tanta-which is the capital of Gharbiyyah. After visiting the person, they went to perform salaah in a masjid. After the salaah, the youngster sat down in the courtyard of the Masjid and began reciting the Quraan. As he read, people gathered around him. In a short while such a huge gathering sat around him that those who were sitting at the end of the gathering were unable to hear his voice. After the recitation an Azhari Aalim asked his grandfather, "Whose son is this, O Haaj?" The grandfather said "He is my grandson" The Alim told him "Do not leave him in the village, rather send him to study in the Ahmadi Institute in Tanta, where he can become an Aalim and a Qari."

Thus they went with this Aalim and filled an admission form. Within a few days, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il joined the Institute. It was, however, difficult for him to travel daily to Tanta, as it was far and he was only fourteen years of age. He therefore, requested his grandfather to rent a room for him in Tanta. Subsequently, a room was rented for him in the building of Haaj Shazhali in Harrat Sabra, off Taha Hakeem Street. It was an apartment on the third floor of the building.

From those days, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to dress like an Azhari ('Imamah tied on the red cap. This is known as a *Tarboosh*, a Jubbah and a caftan). He was the only student to dress in this manner.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il did not formally complete his studies of the Quraan, Tafseer and Fiqh. He attained a special Sanad /Ijaazah (certificate) of a Qari and Aalim from his Ustaad. He began reciting for people in his unique voice and new style which no one had heard before. When one of his teachers, Sheikh Mustafa Murawwaj heard him reciting, he

said "The Ilm is that of the Glorious Quraan . . . and your voice is very beautiful, so let it be spent for the Quraan" It was the practice of this Sheikh to terminate every lesson by saying "Read O Mustafa. . ." He was the one who encouraged Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il to go out and read in the 'Hafalaat' and 'Munasabaat' (Gatherings and Functions). He used to say that a day will come when you will get 5 L.E. a night. Five pounds in those days was similar to five hundred pounds in these days.

His grandfather also used to send him to read in various functions and gatherings, whether he was invited or not, and whether he was going to receive a remuneration or not. He used to provide him with enough provisions for his stay there. His intention was that he gets practice in reading and that he may become a leading Qari one day. His grandfather's concern was not that he should earn something from reciting. In fact he spent on him from his own pocket so that he may be firm and well established in the field of reciting. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to go to a certain area and recite in a gathering, thereafter he would stay on and read for the people until he became well known there. One of his contemporaries in those days was Sheikh AbdulAziz Harbi. Concerning the voice of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il he says; "He used to go to such a high pitch that no one besides him could do it. We used to be surprised and wonder where has this young Qari come from, who reads with such expertise and has the knowledge of the 'Maqamaat'?"

Until the age of fifteen, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il only recited in the neighboring villages and towns, not knowing that the experience he was getting now, will one day take him not only out of these villages or his province, but out of the country. One day during the summer of 1920, he was informed by someone that he will be receiving a telephone call, so he should go to the telephone booth. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il mentions this incident as follows;



"I began fearing, and wondered what could be the reason for this telephonic discussion? When I received the call, it was from a person inviting me to recite in a *Ma'tam* (the mourning ceremony over a deceased) in Kafr Saalim village which was about two kilometers away from my village. This was a long distance for a young Qari who was only fifteen years of age, and this was besides the fact that I had to be there for three days and three nights, as was arranged with the host. I sensed some fear within myself for leaving home and my parents for three full days. I had a mixed feeling of fear and happiness as this was the first time that I would be reciting out of my town and that too, for three days. When I mentioned this to my father he was also afraid, but my mother made Dua and encouraged me. My remuneration was fixed at seventy Piasters for this event, which was the first time that I was receiving anything for my efforts."

When Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il returned after spending three nights in the next village, he gave his mother the seventy Piasters. She was very pleased and proud of him, but did not express this feeling and said "What will I do with this? Keep it by you and spend it on yourself."

During these years, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was like any other youngster of his age. He used to play on the swings, play games, climb trees etc. although he was known as a 'Qari'. On the occasion of Eid, children used to go to the rides and the person in charge would ask for a piece of cake to allow a child on the swings. He went to his mother over and over to get cakes until eventually she had to refuse him. This led him to make a swing of his own in front of his house on a tree with rope, so that he could swing whenever he wished. He did not secure the ropes, and when he began playing on it, he fell and injured himself badly on his face, the scar of which could be seen till the end of his life. Due to this wound he had been under special care and could not attend classes.

Once he recovered, he resumed his lessons. His Ustaad realized that he had forgotten some of the things which he had taught him. He became so angry and furious that he called to his wife and said "You must look after our children from now on. . . I am leaving home never to return because of this student of mine!" The wife came and shouted at the then young Qari saying; "Boy, what have you done?" He said that he did nothing. The Ustaad got up from his place and went to sit outside as if waiting for someone. It so happened that Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's grandfather passed that way. . . He asked the Ustaad about his grandchild. The Ustaad said "By Allah, I am tired and I give up, O Haaj. I do not have the patience to teach him everything again. I came out of the house in anger." My grandfather said to him "Go and hit him till he dies, I am going to fetch his Kafan!" From here it can be seen how serious and how much of importance the grandfather gave to the education of his grandchild.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il himself mentions what happened thereafter; "The Ustaad entered the house calmly and told his wife to bring a cane which was two meters long. When the cane was brought, my 'Ustaad gave me 'Falakah' by tying me up with the help of his wife and his daughter-in-law, who was my cousin. The three of them tied me securely and he began hitting me without any mercy whatsoever."

The incident goes on in detail . . . but the lesson is quite clear, i.e., if one wishes that his child or grandchild achieves something and becomes a luminary in future, he must be stern and strict. Without this, success can never be attained.

#### **QUALIFYING AS A QARI**

Towards the end of his studies by Sheikh Idrees, the month of Ramadhaan approached and it was the habit of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's family to enliven the nights of this auspicious month by Quraanic recitals. This was held nightly in the main house of the family and it was attended by all the members of the family, big and small. Sheikh Mustafa



Isma'il was sixteen years old at this time. He began his studies at the age of eight, so it was for eight years that he studied the Glorious Quraan and its sciences. This was a great success on his part, because commonly to memorize the Glorious Quraan and master its different Qiraa'aat takes much longer than this. Sheikh Idrees was also proud of the fact that Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il completed his studies by him. He had studied under him for two years.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il mentions this incident as follows; "Towards the end of my studies with Sheikh Faakhir the month of Ramadhaan approached and a Qari used to recite in our house every night. When he completed his recitation, one of my relatives asked me to recite Surah As-Saffaat, wishing that I make a mistake in it. In this way he wanted to humiliate Sheikh Faakhir, who was also present, as if to imply to the gathering that he did not teach me properly. I read the Surah without any mistake and my grandfather was very surprised and happy. Sheikh Faakhir was also pleased that I passed this sudden test. He then told my grandfather, "Now I have completed my duty towards Mustafa, and all of you are a witness to that." He then turned to that family member who had asked me to read and asked him what he thought about me. He replied that he sees me as a great person and that I will have a great future. My father who was also present heard all of this and began tearing out of happiness."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was the lad of a family in whom and they all had lots of hope that he would carry the name of the family into the garden of the Glorious Quraan. They sacrificed him for the service of the Glorious Quraan, and his father and grandfather used to spend on him throughout his student days until he qualified.

#### **WITH THE GREAT QURRA**

In the early twenties, he used to recite with great Qurra' in 'Ma'aatim' and 'Munasabaat' and was never nervous or scared. He recited with Sheikh 'Audh, Sheikh Shafeeq

Shahbah, Sheikh Muhammad Saudi, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Aqalah and many other great readers. Once a prominent person by the name of Mr. Qasbi, who loved to listen to the Glorious Quraan and had a taste for a beautiful voice, passed away. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was called to recite at his 'Ma'tam' side by side with the great Qari, Sheikh Muhammad Rifat. This gathering was attended by the elite and prominent personalities from the city of Tanta. This was the initial stages of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il gaining popularity, and it was after this that he became famous in all the coastal areas such as Alexandria, Port Said, Dimyaat, etc. It was in the late twenties and early thirties that Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il began gaining real fame and acclaim throughout the country.

#### **MARRIAGE . . . AND MOVING TO TANTA**

At the age of 23 Sheikh Mustafa Ismail married Fatimah, the daughter of Sheikh Muhammad Umar.

Briefly, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il describes how he found his life-long partner; "When I was 22 years old, I received an invitation to recite at the *Ma'tam* of Sa'ad Zaghloul Basha-leader of the 1919 revolution-in Dimyaat. After the recitation, Sheikh Muhammad Umar who used to run a Madrasah in the area came to me and invited me for a cup of tea at his house the next day. When I went to his house the next morning, I saw a young girl looking out of the window. (At that time I did not know that it was destined for me to marry this girl). The following year I went to Dimyaat and proposed for her through her mother and elder brother, because her father had passed away. She became my life partner and was the mother of my three daughters and three sons."

When he was 25 years old he moved to Tanta, the capital city of his area. Here, the other Mashaaikh spoke about him in ways that he disapproved of. They used to make statements such as; "He did not complete his studies, he is not a qualified Aalim" and so fourth. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il



felt like leaving and going back to his home town but his father advised him to stay on. He acted upon this advice and since then he progressed steadily and reached the heights of glory and became who he became. . .

### **FIRST VISIT TO CAIRO**

Once when Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was reciting at a gathering, a person by the name of Muhammad al-'Awaijee from Cairo was also present in the gathering. After the recitation, he met Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il and they became close friends. When this person's mother passed away, he invited Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il to recite at her '*Ma'tam*' in Cairo. This was the first time Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il received an invitation from Cairo to recite there, and it was the beginning of a long journey which lasted for forty years until he answered the call of his Rabbul-'Izzat.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il mentions; "Many people heard me that night and I received many invitations thereafter. I was invited to recite in a *Ma'tam* for three nights in the Dawoodiyah area."

Concerning the night of his first recitation in Cairo, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il says; "When I arrived in Cairo and met my host, I was informed that Sheikh Muhammad Salamah will also be reciting tonight. I was taken aback and was somewhat worried, because I knew that he does not leave time for the next reciter. In other words he "takes the show." He reads the entire night and when he leaves, the crowd also leaves with him and the marquee is left empty. If anyone has to recite after him then only the chairs listen to him" This is exactly what happened to Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il on the second night of the *Ma'tam*. Sheikh Muhammad Salamah began reciting at 8:00 p.m. and stopped reading at midnight! When he went, all his fans and followers left with him, which made up most of the crowd. The rest of the people also began departing until very few people remained. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il did not allow this to dampen his spirits. He went up and took his place and

began reciting. His first few verses caught the ears of those few who were about to leave. . . and they returned to their chairs. A few who were outside also returned to the marquee and took their seats.

Every time Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il went higher in his recitation, and accelerated his performance, more and more people came to the marquee until it was filled to capacity just as it was in the beginning of the function when Sheikh Salamah was reciting! Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il kept reciting until 4:30 a.m. and the crowd never got tired of his reading. Those who heard him on that night said: "This is a new voice, a new presentation, a new reader who does not follow or imitate any of the other readers." Amongst those present on that night was Sheikh Durwesh al-Hareeri - a master in '*maqaamaat*' (accepted Arabic tones used to recite the Quraan) and a person who knows the sciences of melody and tune.

After the recitation, he met Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il and praised him. Then he asked "Who taught you all these '*maqaamaat*'?" Sheikh Mustafa Ismail replied, "In my entire life whenever I heard a recitation I payed a lot of devotion and attention to it, then I used to practice and derive my own method of pronunciation." On this Sheikh Hareeri told him "Your natural method is more strong and correct than all the methods which are taught. It is not possible for any institute teaching this art to reach that which you have reached in your natural way." He also added; "This is a gift from Allah."

On the fourth night Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was invited to another venue and here too, he was to read with Sheikh Muhammad Salamah. When Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il went to the marquee which was in the '*Mugharbaleen*' area, he was told to recite. He asked "Am I reading before Sheikh Salamah?" They said "Sheikh Salamah is unable to attend and has excused himself. So Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il recited alone on that night and the people were engrossed and held



spell-bound by his voice and superb presentation, moving between the different 'Muqamaat', excellent stops and pauses and his way of giving true essence to the meaning of the Glorious Quraan. It was this night that really made Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il very famous and popular in the entire Cairo.

### **JOINING THE 'RABITAH'**

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to have his clothes sewn by a tailor in the "Khan Khalili" bazaar in Cairo. He liked the sewing of this tailor to such an extent that when he needed anything sewn, he would travel from Tanta to Cairo to have it sewn. The tailor and Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il became very good friends and he loved Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's recitation a lot. Whenever he came to Cairo, the tailor would request him to recite for him at his house. His listeners used to be the tailor and some friends who were present there.

One day in early 1943, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il passed the 'RABITA-TUL-QURRA' office. He told his friend, the tailor, that he was unaware of the existence of an office such as the RABITAH. His friend informed him more about it and encouraged him to go and join it. He told him; "The great Qurra are its members." Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il went to the Rabitah and inquired as to who was in charge there. He was told that it is Sheikh Muhammad as-Saifi who was inside. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il went in. He had heard the name of Sheikh Muhammad as-Saifi previously, and had heard his recitation over the radio and liked it. He met him and the first question he asked Sheikh as-Saifi was, "What does this Rabitah entail?" Sheikh as-Saifi said, "It is where the Qurra get together and strengthen one another." Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il said to him, "I recite the Glorious Quraan in the main cities in the Western province and the coastal areas. My name is Mustafa Muhammad Mursi Ismail. Can I join the Rabitah?" "We welcome you in the Rabitah. The membership fee is ten Piasters" said Sheikh Muhammad as-Saifi. Then he asked Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il to recite for him. After the recitation he told Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il "You are a unique

Qari in every way. You have come at a very appropriate time because the RABITAH is holding a gathering for the Maulid-un-Nabi on the coming Friday. One of our reciters, Sheikh AbdulFatah Sha'sha'ee has excused himself due to his ill health, so we need an excellent Qari like yourself to recite at the occasion. You will recite for half an hour because the programme will be broadcast over the air simultaneously, and every Qari gets to read for half an hour."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il returned to Tanta and told his family about this great news that he was to recite over the Radio for the first time.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was in the habit of reading for hours on end . . . , so how could he now read for only half an hour!? He took a watch and began practicing to read for half an hour. He began thinking of a way of how to present his recitation within half an hour. Because generally he took 20 - 30 minutes just to 'warm up'. How was he to do a complete recitation in just half hour???! His son Aatif says; "This was the first and the last time we saw our father reading in the house. We all made Dua for his success."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il mentions the occasion as follows; "I arrived at Masjid Husain before the Esha Salaah. It was filled to capacity. Amongst the audience there were many who had heard my recitation on previous occasions. They gathered around me and requested me to recite a little before the actual programme begins. I agreed, and recited for them. This was like a 'warm up' session for me, and when the time came, I was ready to read over radio."

Thus the voice of Qari Sheikh Mustafa Ismail went over the air for the first time in history, reciting Surah At-Tahreem. This was when Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il became famous in the entire Egypt, in fact, in the entire world.



Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il says; "I recall that night . . . as I finished and took my shoes to walk out of the Masjid, people gathered all round me to such an extent that it was difficult for me to walk. When I came out in the street, I was surrounded by the masses. When I walked, they walked, when I stopped they stopped! I asked someone as to what these people wanted. They told me that they desire to listen to another recitation from me now! By this time we had reached 'Atabah where there had been a *Ma'tam* and the Qurra had terminated their reading. The crowd pushed me towards this marquee and requested me to read. I sat and read till the time of dawn. When I returned home in the morning, I found my family and local people waiting for me. All were pleased and congratulated me. After this event, I began receiving invitations from all over to recite."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il narrates another incident laughingly; "Once a police car came to my house in Meit-Ghazal. I was not at home at that time. When I returned, an officer caught hold of me and took me into the police car. He told me "We are investigating you, so you will have to come with us to the Headquarters in Tanta." I said "But why? I have not done anything" They said "Its orders." As we drove, we passed the police headquarters of Tanta, and headed towards Cairo. Here the car went onto Ibrahim Basha Street towards 'Aabideen Palace. I began worrying even more. When we entered the palace, I was afraid, but I found that I am being welcomed . . . and I was immediately taken to the office of Muraad Muhsin Basha, who was the special minister of the king. He told me "I have heard you reciting over the radio, so I request you to read for us now." As I was about to begin, a person walked in and was introduced to me as Muhammad Haidar Basha, the minister of the army. At the end of my recitation, Haidar asked Muhsin "From where have you brought him?" Muhsin told him that he had heard me over Radio, and that he had sent the police to bring me here. They both laughed at this. Haider Basha gave me his address in Zamalik and told me to visit him."

This was the first meeting between Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il and the ministers at the palace. As he was leaving, Muhsin Basha told him "We are holding the annual memorial ceremony for the late King Fuad on the 28<sup>th</sup> April (1943). King Farooq will be present there, and the radio will broadcast your recitation from that ceremony."

On the stipulated night, the King and all the ministers including high ranking dignitaries and the ambassadors were present at the gathering. There were three reciters only, and amongst them was Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il (who was in his late 30's at that time.)

The month of Ramadhaan in those years used to fall in summer. The King used to spend these months in Alexandria-the second capital. Muraad Muhsin Basha had arranged with Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il and Sheikh Abul Aynayn to read for the King every night in the '*Ra's-at-Teen*' palace in Alexandria. The recitation of every night was broadcast over radio. This continued for every Ramadhaan annually till 1952. It was stopped during the revolution, and then continued thereafter.

#### **SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMA'IL AND THE 'IZHAA'ATUL-QURAAN-AL KAREEM' (RADIO STATION)**

The radio station conferred many favours upon Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il. It was due to the radio that he became famous, but in spite of all of this, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il had some problems with the station. The station wished to broadcast half an hour of his recitation weekly as they were doing with other great Qurra'. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il responded to this saying; "How can I read for half an hour, when I am in the habit of reading for few a hours at a time?" There was also a public demand to hear Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il over air, and the radio kept trying to get Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il to recite for half an hour.

Once the officials came to see him in his village, Meit-Ghazal to discuss this matter. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il told them



"Firstly, I cannot read for half an hour only, allow me to read for one full hour. Secondly, I cannot read in a closed studio. I need to be amongst people in a Masjid. Thirdly, I am stipulating a fee of 50 L.E. per recital (which in those days was a lot of money for a single recitation)." Laughingly, the Sheikh says "I did not want fifty, nor sixty Pounds from them, rather I wanted them to leave me alone. But then I told them "I am ready to read free of charge, but only if you agree to my other two conditions." They arranged a date for him to meet with the head of the radio station.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il mentions this meeting in his discussions as follows; "When I went to meet him, I was not given the honour and reception fit for a Qari of the Glorious Quraan. I was made to wait for 3/4 of an hour in the secretary's office. Then I was sent into his office. He was having a lengthy discussion over the phone. I kept standing all this while. When he put the phone down, I looked at him angrily and said "I do not wish to work for the radio station. I did not come here on my own and to receive this kind of treatment. It was your staff members who asked me to come here. I will never work for the station and I hope you do not contact me again."

Thus, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il did not have anything to do with the radio till 1948. The public complained excessively, as they wanted to hear him over air, because Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at had also stopped reading over the radio (*due to his ill-health. He passed away in 1950.*) The desire to hear him on air grew to such an extent that a journalist wrote an article about this in the papers. This placed the Radio station in a difficult spot and they did not know how to come to an agreement with Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il. After some time, Muraad Muhsin Basha and Muhammad Haidar Basha, who had become his close friends, told him that this was the system of the Radio station which cannot be changed. . . Sheikh Rif'at and all the other Qurra had accepted it. They spoke to him until he agreed to sign a contract with the station. He was not contented or happy

with this, although his weekly recital of half an hour was well accepted and it made the masses happy.

He used to say; "This reading for thirty minutes in the studio . . . this is not Mustafa Ismail!" Because his voice was trained to read for long durations. After every hour of his recital, his voice used to become better and sweeter. It was not easy for him to read for half an hour only. His voice and presentation could not reach its peak in only half an hour in the studio.

### **TAKING UP RESIDENCE IN CAIRO**

First Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il moved from Meit Ghazal to Tanta. Then he moved from there to Cairo. Initially he lived in the 'Mugharbaleen' area in Cairo, then Muraad Muhsin Basha organized a special apartment for him at a hotel. Thereafter, he moved to Zamalik. He then called his family over. Later he purchased a villa in Zamalik and lived there till his demise.

Kaniaal Najmi - a famous author-says "I met Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il many times in his villa. Once when I was talking with him he asked me; 'you are a "Sa'eedi" (a person from Sa'eed-Upper Egypt), so who, in your opinion is the best Qari in Sa'eed presently?' I said 'There are many SA-AA'IDAH' QURRA . . . the likes of Sheikh AbdulBasit, Sheikh Ruzaiqi, Sheikh Fashni . . . but the best in my opinion is Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi-the father of the two Qaris, Muhammad and Mahmood. After a while he asked me 'Have you not heard of Sheikh Abdou Abdur Radhi?' It was the first time I heard this name, so I asked him 'Who is this Sheikh Abdou?' He was surprised and said 'You are a Sa'eedi, and you do not know Sheikh Abdou!'" He then went on to praise this Qari as I never heard before. I never saw a great and famous Qari like Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il praising another Qari who was not as famous. But this was Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, who was a man of noble and gentle character."



Concerning Sa'eed (Upper Egypt), Shukri al-Qadhi writes that 'Sa'eed' has produced some of the best Qurra of Egypt. Firstly Moulana Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, then Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshawi and his sons, Sheikh Muhammad al-Minshaawi (Rahimahullah) and his younger brother Mahmood al-Minshaawi - the present reciter at Masjid as-Shafi'ee, then the flag bearer of the Glorious Quraan, Sheikh AbdulBasit, and before him Sheikh Mahmood AbdulHakam. There are also other great Qurra who were not reciters over the radio (therefore they are not famous), like Sheikh Abdou Abdur Raadhi, Sheikh Hasanain al-Kaluhi, Sheikh 'Audh al-Qausi, and Sheikh Taha al-Fashni. Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at and the Minshaawis were from the Sohaag province, while Sheikh AbdulBasit and Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi are from Qina, and Sheikh Taha Fashni was from Bani Suwayf. All these are areas in 'Sa'eed'.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il respected his elders and showed love to those younger than him. He never uttered any such words by which a rift or friction would be caused between his contemporaries. Whenever anyone asked him about them he would say; "ربنا يوسع رزق الجميع"

May Allah Ta'aala increase the sustenance of everyone.

He used to say "Every Qari has his own colour and style, and has a place in the eyes of the masses. Listening is like food, someone likes eating trotters while others like eating roasted meat, whilst others relish soup. . . May Allah honour everyone."

### **HIS FRIENDS**

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il had very few close friends. Amongst his special friends was the Great Qari, Sheikh Hashim Heebah. They went together for Hajj. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il held him in high esteem and regarded him as an excellent reciter of the Glorious Quraan.

### **SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMA'IL AND SHEIKH MUHAMMAD RIF'AT**

When Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il began gaining fame in the early 1930's, Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at was considered to be the greatest Qari of the Glorious Quraan in the entire world. When they met for the first time and Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at heard Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il's reading, he was very surprised. He praised him, encouraged him and gave him glad tidings of a great and bright future.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to say; "Indeed Sheikh Rif'at used to interpret the meanings of the Glorious Quraan in his recitation. He had reached that point in the recitation of the Quraan where no one can reach."

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il never compared himself to Sheikh Rif'at in any way. He was a very humble man who never spoke about himself. The listeners however, would classify their readings and deduce the following differences: Sheikh Rif'at had an angelic voice to which there is no parallel. Very seldom he read for more than half hour. When he did, then after the first half an hour, he would repeat the same presentation and style. On the contrary, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il had a legendary voice. The longer he read the stronger and more beautiful his voice became. He never repeated the same style and manner of presentation, but always surprised his listeners by introducing new styles in his recitation. Sheikh Rif'at had never been influenced and effected by the world and its beauty his entire life, therefore his reading was filled with 'Huzn' (sorrow and emotion) while Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il was the opposite. He's recitation would fill one with joy.

Sheikh Abdul Fattah al-Qadhi - who was a contemporary of Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at and Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il- held an interesting viewpoint. He said: "The best reciters of the Glorious Quraan Egypt has seen are three: Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, Sheikh Mansoor Bidaar and Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, according to their ages. He further says, if I



am asked 'If there are three different gatherings at the same time and each one of these Qurra are reciting in one of these gatherings, then where will you go?' I would say 'I will go to Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at in the beginning because he will give me a lot in his first half an hour. Then I will fly to Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, and thereafter I will go for a little while in the end to Sheikh Mansoor Bidaar, because I will get much more from Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il than from Sheikh Mansoor Bidaar.'

The famous Egyptian musician, Muhammad AbdulWahhab had a different opinion. After listening to many recordings of Sheikh Abdou Abdur-Raadhi, he said "I am now convinced that the three great reciters of the Glorious Quraan are; Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il and this Sheikh Abdou." It was said to him "You have heard of Sheikh Ahmad Nadaa, Sheikh Mahmood Manakhali, Sheikh Ismail Sakar, Sheikh Ali Mahmood and many other great reciters of the Glorious Quraan. If you recall their recitations will your opinion change?" He said "No! There is no one to match Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at and Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il from all those whom I have heard."

By the forty's, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il became very famous. He shone like a star, people began listening to his new voice and he had millions of admirers all over the world. The beauty of his voice in the thirty's and forty's cannot be described. He is regarded as the next best reader after Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at in the entire world!

#### **HIS RECORDINGS . . . HIS VOICE . . .**

None of his recordings of the thirty's are available, and the recordings of the forty's also very rare.

He always had something unique about his voice. Then in 1953, due to an incident in his family, he underwent some very difficult conditions and suffered ill health for some months. The outcome of this was that when he recovered and began reading again, his voice emerged even better than before. His son 'Aatif bin Mustafa Isma'il says that his

voice was never the same as it was before this difficult patch which he underwent. However this rejuvenation, in fact enhanced his voice further.

He had a very difficult life as a result of enmity, opposition, and jealousy. This is obvious, because the more famous a person becomes, the more enemies he has. People who were his friends on face value used to stab him in the back later. A person who had initially encouraged him to join the radio and later was instrumental in getting him approved at the Station, became jealous and turned out to be a hindrance in his life as far as his recitation was concerned. He would intercept invitations which came to the 'AWQAAF' for Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, both, from inside Egypt and abroad. Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to overlook these kinds of incidents and go on with his life. He kept up good relations with all people. He never tried to gain anything even though he was lawfully entitled to it.

#### **QARI OF MASJID -UL-AZHAR AL-SHAREEF**

Once when the place of the official weekly reciter at al-Azhar Masjid was vacant, Sheikh Ibrahim as-Shahaatah and Sheikh AbdulFattah al-Qadhi approached him and said "There is a vacancy at al-Azhar Masjid, why do you not apply for it?" He said "That would require me to go to the 'WAZAARAT-UL-AWQAAF' and apply there, and I am not prepared to do that." They said 'Here is the application, we have written it out for you. All you have to do is sign it. We will forward it to Sheikh ad-Dabba.'" Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il signed the paper and consequently Sheikh ad-Dabba' gave him an appointment.

When he went for the appointment and Sheikh ad-Dabba' heard him, he was taken aback and said "May the Lord open the way for you. It is indeed an honour for you and for us to have you to recite at al-Azhar. You will receive a letter from the AWQAAF within two days." Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il did not receive any such letter. All this was in 1947 when he was at the pinnacle of his fame and people would gather



around him in huge numbers to listen to him. He did not bother about the letter, but Muraad Basha and Muhammad Haidar heard of this incident and they contacted the AWQAAF and ensured that he was appointed as the reciter at al-Azhar Masjid. He was not yet approved to recite on radio (due to the conditions that he had stipulated. He was approved to recite on Radio in 1948, as was previously mentioned).

He recited here for more than thirty years until he passed away. When he went to recite for the first time at al-Azhar Masjid, he was accompanied by many fans. As they entered the Masjid they found that there was neither 'Dikkah' (seat of reciting) nor any microphones! They realized that this was the doing of some jealous person. The tailor by whom Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to have his clothes sewn was with them. He told Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il: "Sit here and recite without the microphones." As he began reading, a group of people came towards them and tried to stop him from reading! The fans of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il stood up and protected him from all sides. The tailor threw himself on Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il to protect him. There was commotion in the Masjid. By the time this ended, there were only ten minutes left for Azhaan. After the Jumm'ah Salaah people gathered around him and demanded that he reads again. He complied and read till the time of Salaat-ul-Asar!

Once it became known that he recites at Masjid Al-Azhar weekly, there used to be a huge crowd every Friday. The police officers had to control traffic from 10:00 a.m. from 'Atabah till al-Azhar. The ladies section of the Masjid used to be also filled with his female fans. His recitations used to be broadcasted to the entire world!

#### **SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMA'IL'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Mustafa Ismail travelled to many countries in the East and the West. He recited in many Masaajid in Karachi, America, Europe and Asia. Muslims in San Francisco, Paris,

London, Kuala Lumpur, Ankara, Istanbul, Tehran, Damascus and Beirut heard him. He also recited in all the Arab countries. He recited twice in Al-Quds, first in around 1960, and then in 1977. The Sheikh also recited in ten African countries. He visited Syria in 1958 and again in 1960, Lebanon in 1959, Paris in 1967 and Malaysia in 1974. He also visited Indonesia.

#### **AWARDS AND MEDALS AWARDED TO SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMA'IL**

He received many awards from Arabian and Islamic countries. After the Egyptian revolution on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1952, he was still the leading Qari in all the 'Ihtifaalaat' and 'Munasabaat'. He was given the very first award ever given to a Qari of the Glorious Quraan. This was in 1965. It was in the same year that he received awards from Lebanon as well. In 1973, he went to Turkey where he met the president in the republican palace in Ankara. The president gave him a copy of the Glorious Quraan which was written in gold!

#### **SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMA'IL'S CHARACTER AND HABITS**

He was a legend, a gentle, soft natured and soft spoken person. He possessed very high character. He maintained his self esteem. He used to say "It is very important that a reciter of the Glorious Quraan looks after his self esteem and honour". He was great amongst the greatest of people, yet very humble. During his days in his village, Meit - Ghazal, he did not mind going to the plantations himself. He used to personally tend to the horses which they reared. He was a very systematic and particular person. He always dressed neatly and in an orderly manner. He had expensive taste and always used the best of things. He used to quote the following verse; *وأما بنعمة ربك فحدث* and say "I do not mise on myself, I spend to my hearts desire."

He loved reading. He used to study subjects such as Tafseer, Hadeeth, and Seerah. He had a library in his house which had many books on different topics. He liked spending



his leisure time by reading magazines. He had a taste for memorizing and saying poetry.

Once a journalist wrote about him as follows, "Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il plays the piano in his house. . ." When he read it, he was surprised because there was no basis for this statement. He thought about writing to them, but then abandoned the idea and said "I do not know how to play piano or any other musical instrument, I was involved with the Glorious Quraan my entire life, and that is more charming and enticing than all the musical instruments known to men." Then laughingly he says "The radio is the only instrument upon which I put my finger and that is when I tune it to find different stations."

He really loved listening to the Glorious Quraan by voices other than his own. Whenever he heard a recitation, he would get engrossed in it. He never listened to himself on cassette or on radio. In fact, he did not like recording himself. Cassettes which are available of his recordings are that which had been recorded by his friends and fans.

Towards the latter part of his life, he began walking a lot as per orders of the doctor. He used to walk for about two hours daily, until it became a part of his routine.

His eating habits were that he would begin by eating a plate of 'fool' (beans) followed by eggs cooked in 'Ghee' (butter) then he would partake of some gravy followed by milk and marmalade. Generally in the mornings he would eat vegetables, meat and rice or pasta. In the evenings, he liked eating a small piece of cheese and yoghurt. These were his eating habits before he was afflicted with high blood pressure in 1970. After this, he followed a strict diet which the doctors had formulated for him.

#### **FAMILY OF SHEIKH MUSTAFA ISMA'IL**

He brought his children up with lots of kindness and love, and at the same time very sternly. He was very protective

over his three daughters. He never allowed them to go outdoors uncovered.

He has three sons. They are;  
'Aatif, who is employed by a bank in Heidelberg, Albania.  
Muhammad Sameer, who holds a high position at 'Egypt Air'.  
Ahmad Waheed, who is a managing director at the telecommunications office.

His three daughters are;  
Anja, wife of Mitwaali Hasani, who works at the administration department of 'Egypt Air'  
Samiyah, wife of Hasan Fakhri Umar, who is a dentist.  
Magidah, wife of Mustafa Qabaaini, who is the Director General at a petroleum company.

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il used to be absent from home for lengthy durations due to being invited to participate in functions in other places. During this time, his wife used to nurture these children. He was a good natured and kind husband. He was a very generous man, especially when it came to spending on his family and his household.

#### **ILLNESS AND DEMISE**

Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il always made Dua that Allah Ta'aala must allow him to recite the Glorious Quraan in good meritorious voice till the end of his life. . . and Allah Ta'aala accepted this Dua!

He was a high blood patient, but he avoided going to the doctors unless it was really necessary. When he got ill in 1970, he became very weak and lost a lot of weight, a total of 35 kg in less than three months. This affected his physical strength and his golden voice. The cassettes which are in the possession of the Radio and television Stations and by people today are all those which were recited after this illness had afflicted him. These can only give us an idea of



what his actual recitation must have been like before his illness.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 1978, he traveled from Meit-Ghazal at 9:00 a.m. to Dimyaat to participate in a function of the opening of a Masjid there. On the way, he was joking and making his driver laugh as was his usual habit. He was also reciting some Qur'aan in the car. The driver mentions that as he was reciting, he kept forgetting and made some errors in his reading. He kept asking the driver which is the next aayaah. When they reached the place, he rendered his recital - which was his final one. After the function, he told his driver to take him back to Myt-Ghazal. When they came to the forking route, he told his driver to go towards Alexandria. All the while he was cheerful and jolly with the driver. When they reached Damanhoor, he told the driver to stop and get some *fool* (beans) sandwiches which he ate with his driver. This was the last food the Sheikh had eaten in his life. When they reached his apartment in the Rushdi area in Alexandria, he told his driver to cover the car with the sail. This surprised the driver as Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il always prevented him from doing so.

As the driver began doing this, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il told him; "I will not be getting into the car again." When he went indoors he told his Khadimah (servant) and the servant's husband to come and sit with him. He began showing his love and affection towards them. . . and told them to look after the building properly. Then he asked them to have tea with him. The sweeper says, "Suddenly he was gone out of this world and began saying "I am sitting by the throne of Allah Ta'aala and the world is going away from me. . ." He then asked to be taken to the first floor where his bedroom was. The servant asked him "Do you wish to sleep now?" He said "I am going to the burial of Fatimah (which was his wife's name) because she has passed away." The servant was surprised by this statement because his wife was still alive.

Anyway, he went into his room and began calling out to his daughter who was in Tanta. The servant told him "My name is Saraari." He told her "Come here my daughter, see what is causing pain in my head." He then lapsed into a sleep, and she thought that he is tired from his journey and wants to sleep. He was breathing normally. She was not aware that he had bleeding in his brain (hemorrhage) and that it had affected his entire body. She left him to sleep till 2:30 p.m. the next day. She used to come and check on him regularly, and when she found that he was breathing normally, she would leave. It was only when one of his friends phoned and the servant told him what was transpiring, that he came with the doctor and took him to the hospital in Alexandria. All this time he was unconscious. There the doctor began treating him.

At that very same time, his son 'Aatif, who was in Albania, was having a casual chat with his wife and mentioned to her "If ever something happens to my father, and all the flights to Cairo are booked, I will go through Moscow or any other route to get to Cairo." He was not aware that at that precise moment his father was being afflicted with hemorrhage in Cairo. The next day he received a call from Cairo informing him that his father is unconscious in hospital. When they received this news in Albania, his wife, who was not yet a Muslim, read the Kalimah and accepted the Deen of Islaam. 'Aatif made arrangements to fly to Egypt. He flew by Lufthansa Airlines to Cairo and from there to Alexandria. When he reached the hospital, his father was still in the state of unconsciousness.

The media was constantly inquiring about the condition of the great Sheikh. A representative from the president's office also came to inquire about the Sheikh. He was unconscious for three days and passed away in this condition.

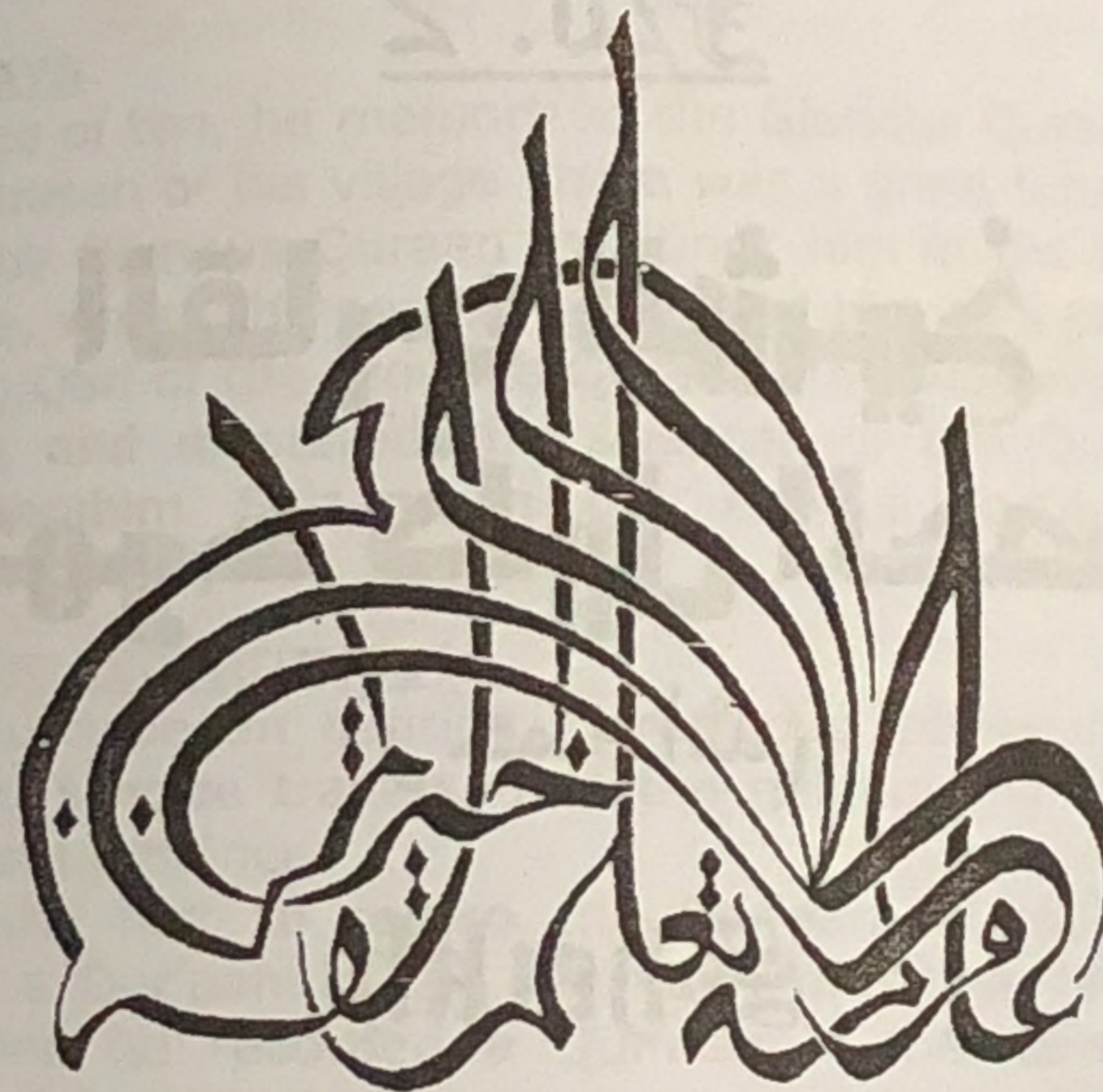
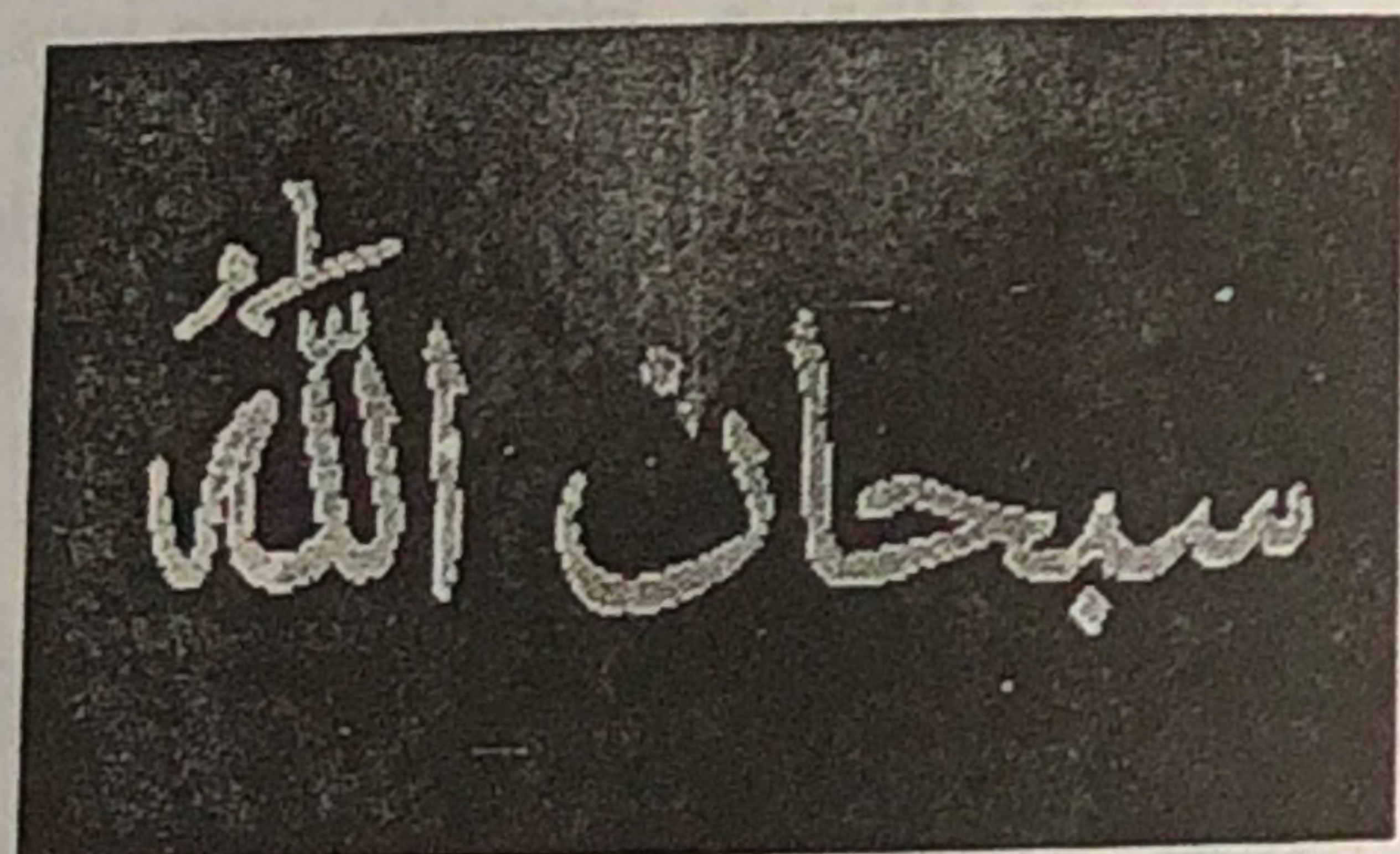
When he passed away, the government granted permission to bury him in his house in Meit-Ghazal as was his wish. He



also bequeathed that a Masjid be built there and that he must be buried in it. Sheikh Muhammad Mitwalli as-Sha'raawi delivered the final words and he was buried in Jama Umar Mukarram in the morning. A representative from the president's office and many dignitaries and influential people attended the funeral. The Japanese television broadcasted the entire funeral over their channel.

As he was being carried to his final resting place, the roads were lined with soldiers on either side on foot and on horseback. The people of his village carried his body from Masjid Umar Mukarram and walked with it, saying "لا اله الا الله" and buried him in a spacial graveyard, next to the masjid which was built by the Sheikh in the sixties, on the request made by the Sheikh himself.

Shaikh Mustafa Muhammad Al-Mursi Ibrahim Ismail, who was famously known as Siiekh Mustafa Isma'il, lived for 73 years.

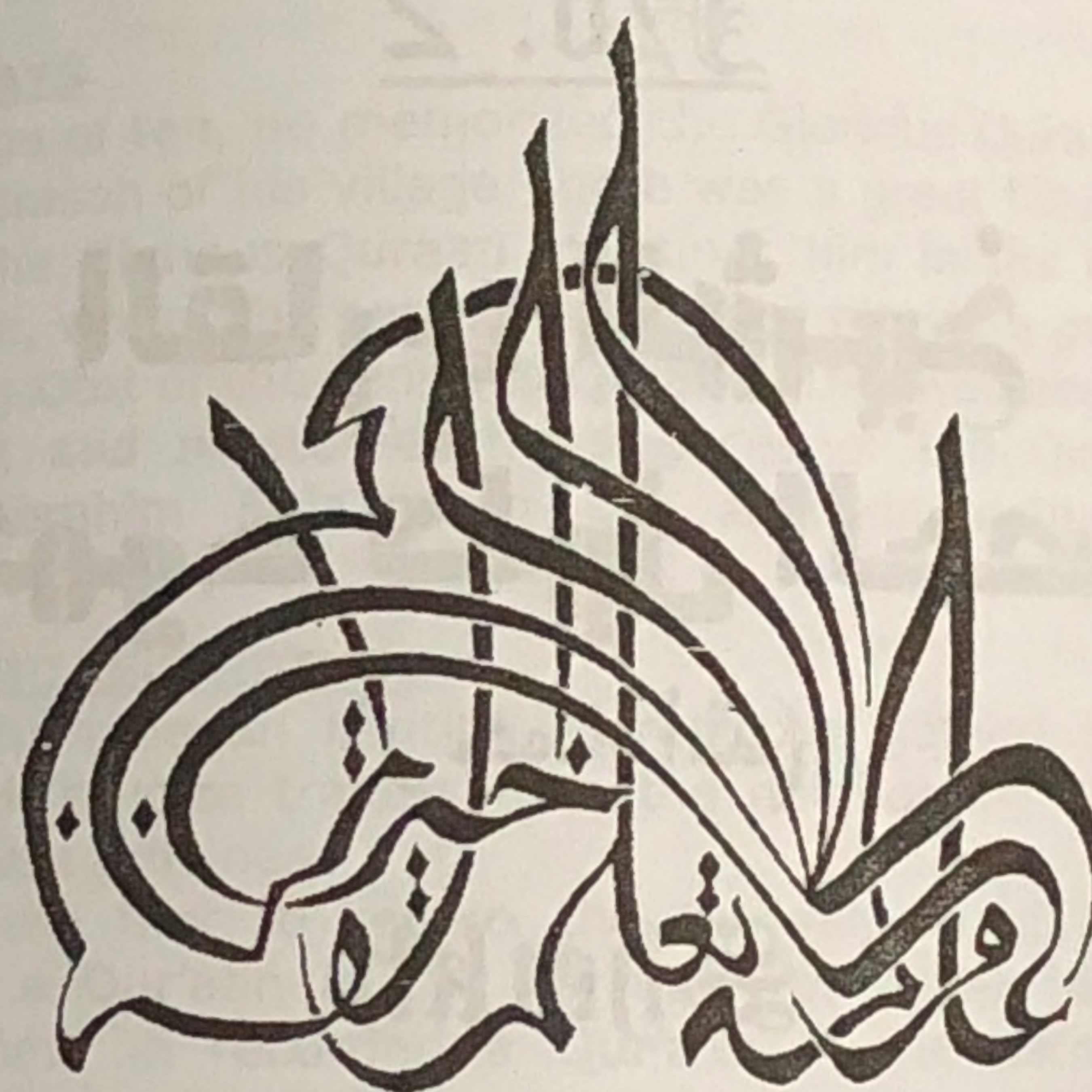
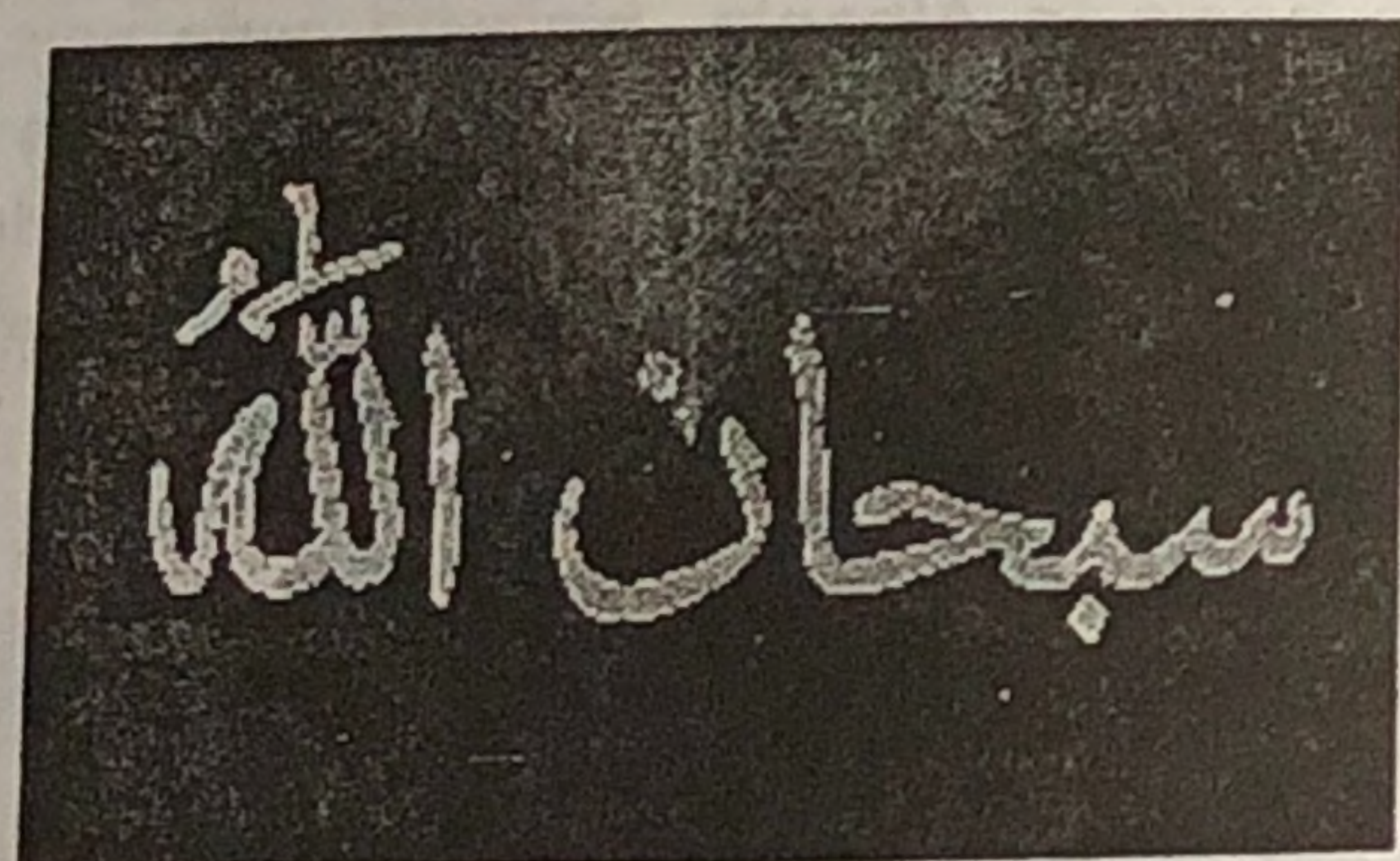




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Shaikh Mustafa Muhammad Al-Mursi Ibrahim Ismail, who was famously known as SHeikh Mustafa Isma'il, lived for 73 years.







No. 2

# القارئ الشيخ محمود خليل الحصري

(رحمه الله)

Sheikh  
Mahmood Khaleel  
al-Husri  
Rahimahullah



## SHEIKH MAHMOOD KHALEEL AL-HUSRI رحمه الله

### BIRTH

27<sup>th</sup> September 1917 in 'Shibrun Namlah' a village in Tanta, this is in the Western province. (According to some records he was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September)

### EARLY DAYS

By the age of ten, he memorized the Glorious Quraan in the local Madrasah of his village. There was a great future in the field of the Glorious Quraan awaiting him in the Masjid of his village, where the people recognized him as a promising, upcoming Qari of the Glorious Quraan. This was even before he learnt and mastered the sciences of the Qiraa'at by Sheikh Ibrahim Salaam in the Ahmadi Institute. (Al-Ma'hadul Ahmadi)

### QUR'AANIC RECORDINGS

Sheikh Husri began reciting in religious gatherings in the 1930's. He's voice traversed to the neighboring villages of the Western province.

He was the first to record the Qur'aan on cassette. He recorded a Qur'aan in the narration of Warsh 'an nafi in 1964. Then he recorded a Qur'aan in the narrations of Qaloon and Doori in 1968.

He began the mission of initiating "Hifzul-Qur'aan" Madrasahs in all the towns and cities.

### TO CAIRO

He came to Cairo in the early 1940's. He undertook the test to qualify to recite on Radio. He passed this exam and was approved in 1955. Since then, he lived his life in accordance to the Glorious Quraan, learning it and teaching it to others.

### POSITIONS AND POSTS HELD BY THE SHEIKH . . .

He was appointed as chief of Qurra' of Tanta in 1947. Thereafter he was appointed as the supervisor of the Qurra' in the entire Western province. He was then appointed as the reciter of Masjid Ahmad Al-Badawi. He remained at this post from 1949 to 1955. In 1960 he was moved to Masjid Sayidina Husain R.A. in Cairo to recite. This was after the



demise of Sheikh Muhammad As-Saifi. Later he was appointed as the Secretary General for the affairs of all the Qurra' in Egypt. He was also appointed as a member of the affairs of the Quraan in the WAZAARATUL AWQAAF in 1963. In 1964, he was appointed as head of the "Research and correction of the Quraan" committee. In 1967, he was appointed as the grand Aalim of the teachings of the Quraan and Sunnah in the 'Islamic Research Center.' Sheikh Husri remained the chief of the affairs pertaining to the Qurra' of the Islamic world till his death.

#### **ONE OF THE GREATEST QARIS . . .**

He is regarded as the third most famous Qari of the Glorious Quraan in history after Sheikh Muhammad Rifat and Sheikh Abdulbasit Abdus Samad (R.A.) This categorizing is according to spreading the Glorious Quraan, not according to the status of reciting the Quraan, because then the sequence changes completely with the exemption of Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at (R.A.)

#### **SHEIKH MAHMOOD KHALIL HUSRI'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Husri travelled extensively to spread the Glorious Quraan. He undertook more than 50 journeys to various parts of the world to recite and propagate the Glorious Quraan. He visited the United States of America in 1977. Many Americans and Europeans accepted Islam on his hands. He even went to the U.K. and recited in London. In 1960 he went to India and Pakistan and many other countries.

Sheikh Husri was so attached and dedicated to the Glorious Qur'an that towards the end of his life, he bequeathed that one third of his wealth be given towards the service and propagation of the Glorious Qur'an!

Sheikh Mahmood Khaleel al-Husri lived for 63 years. He passed away on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1980.





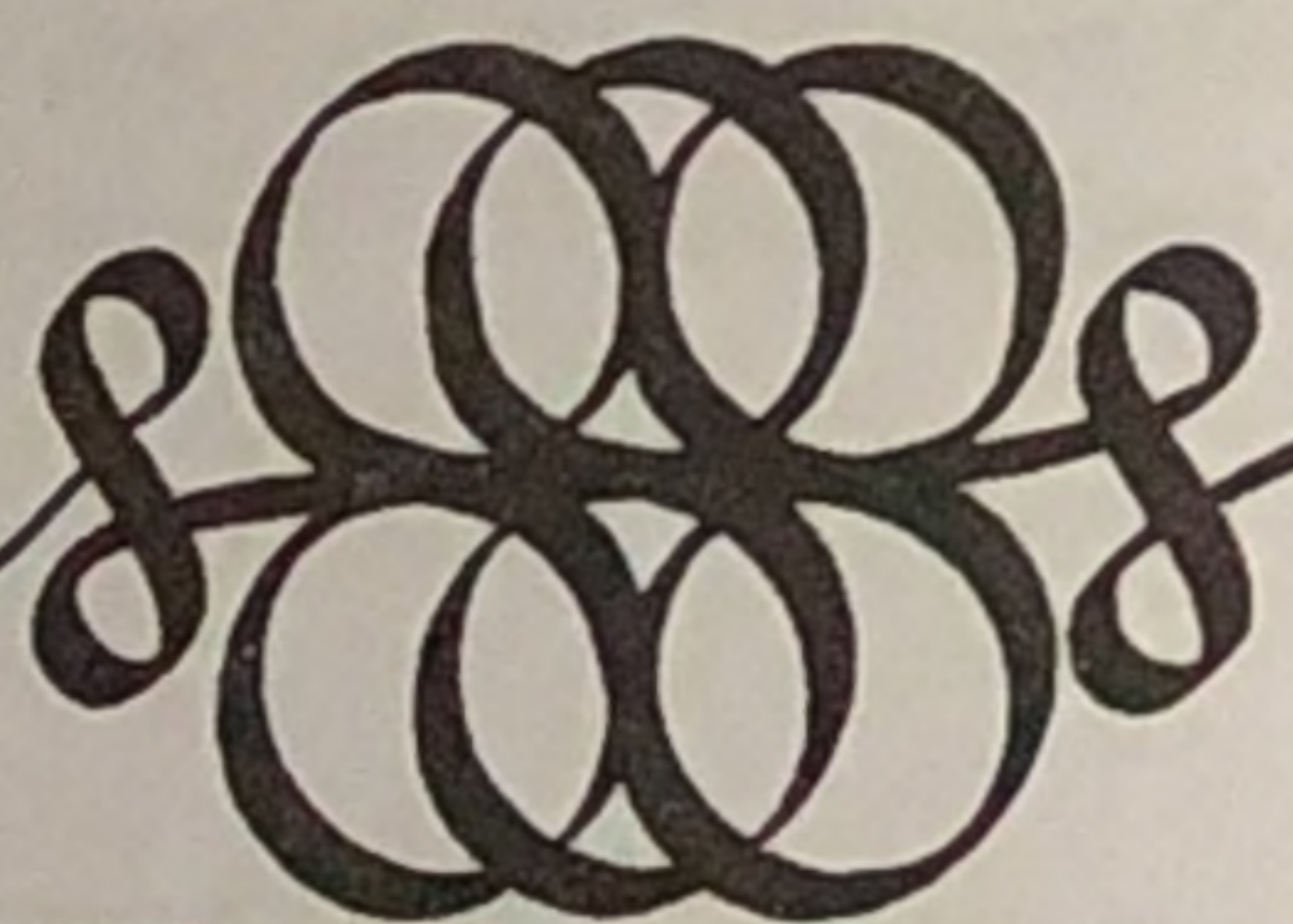


No. 3

القارئ الجليل والمقرئ  
الكبير،  
مولانا الشيخ محمد  
صديق المنشاوي

(رحمه الله وأسكنه فسيح جناته)

Sheikh  
Muhammad Siddeeq  
al-Minshaawi  
Rahimahullah



SHEIKH MUHAMMAD SIDDEEQ AL-  
MINSHAAWI رحمه الله

**BIRTH**

20 January 1920, in Minshaah, which is in the (سوهاج) Sohaag province in Upper Egypt. He was brought up in such a family wherein most of the members were Qari's of the Glorious Quraan.

**EARLY STUDENT DAYS**

He began memorizing the Glorious Quraan by his father, Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi - one of the most famous Qaris of his time - and completed it by Sheikh Muhammad An-Namki before the age of eleven. His father was very strict with him during his studying days. He sent him to study the sciences and the knowledge of the Glorious Quraan by Sheikh Muhammad Sa'ud and Sheikh Muhammad Abul-'Alaa.

Amongst his other Ustaads was Sheikh Abdul Fattah al-Qadhi, who was also the Ustaad of Sheikh Mahmood Khaleel Al-Husri. When he was once asked as to who were his best students, he replied; "Sheikh Mahmood Khaleel Al-Husri and Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi . . ."

After completing his studies, he began joining his father or his uncle when they would go to recite at various functions. He had inherited his sweet voice from his father.

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi is from a household which has given all its male off-spring for the service of the Glorious Quraan, beginning from the eldest, Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A. and the last thus far, is his younger brother, Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi. Amongst them is also his uncle Sheikh Ahmad Thaabit-the famous Qari.



The voice of Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A. traversed over air for the first time from Isna' when he accompanied his father in commemorating a night by reciting the Glorious Quraan. As soon as his beautiful sweet voice reached the ears of people, he won wide spread acclaim and had fans all over. This was also due to the fact that he possessed in depth knowledge of the 'Maqamaat' and he had the strong capability to portray the meanings of what he was reciting from the Glorious Quraan.

The most famous of his recitations are those which he used to recite at the 'Mualid' of Abul Hajjaj Aqsuri. Those exuberant nights used to be enlivened by the recitation of the verses of the Glorious Quraan by Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A., and it was broadcasted to most of the Islamic and Arab States. This is how he gained popularity throughout the world and became a leading Qari.

#### **APPROVAL AT THE RADIO STATION**

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A. is the first Qari in the history of the Egyptian Radio concerning whom it was decided that he will be approved even *before* he came and undertook the examination! This was when he was already famous in صعيد (Upper Egypt) in the 1940's. The radio had broadcasted his recitation in the blessed month of Ramadhaan from Isna in 1953. Thereafter he was accepted to recite on Radio the same year. The radio station has over one hundred and fifty of his recordings, which he recorded specifically for them. This is besides the 'Mus'haful Murattal' (complete set of the Glorious Quraan), which he also recorded for the station. All the great Qurra are unanimous that his 'Mus'haful Murattal' is the best and most unique 'Mus'haf' in the history of the recitation of the Glorious Quraan. He has also received a lot of praise for his 'Mus'haful Mujawwad'.

He possessed a very unique voice which was loved by all. He recited with real feeling and gave true essence to the words of the Glorious Quraan.

The bounty of listening to the Glorious Quraan is from amongst the greatest bounties which Allah Ta'aala has bestowed upon the Muslims. The 'Ahlul-Quraan' (people of the Quraan) are the best and choicest from all the creation, especially those who have encompassed all the rules of recitation and possess good character as well as beautiful and amazing presentation.

Sheikh Muhammad Bin Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi is from amongst them. He is one of the more prominent ones from the choicest ones in the register of the elite Qurra' of the Glorious Quraan. He is amongst the legends of the second group of the great and remarkable Qurra' like Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, Sheikh Abul Aynayn, Sheikh Kamil Bahtimi, Sheikh Mahmood Khalil Husri, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna, Sheikh AbdulBasit, and Sheikh Mahmood Abdul Hakam. It was this group of Qurra who kept the flag of the Glorious Quraan high up after the great masters of recitation such as Sheikh Ahmad Nadaa, Sheikh Muhammad Saifi, Sheikh Ali Mahmood, Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, Sheikh Muhammad Salamah, Sheikh Ahmad Sulaiman Sa'dani, Sheikh Abdul Fattah Sha'sha'ee, and Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi (the father of Sheikh Muhammad and Sheikh Mahmood).

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A. is amongst those who had given their lives for the services of the Glorious Quraan. It is almost impossible to find a parallel to him.

#### **SHEIKH MUHAMMAD AL-MINSHAAWI'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A. visited many countries world wide. Some of the countries he went to are, Indonesia, Syria, Pakistan, Jordan, Libya, Algeria, Kuwait, Iraq and Saudia.



### **AWARDS, MEDALS AND HONOURS CONFERRED UPON SHEIKH MUHAMMAD AL-MINSHAAWI R.A.**

He was given honours and awards from many Islamic states. In the mid 1950's, when he visited Indonesia with Sheikh AbdulBasit, he was awarded with a very high and superior medal. In 1965 he was awarded with a medal by Syria. A street has been named after him in Giza, Cairo.

After his demise, the state awarded a medal of the first grade in his name in a gathering on the eve of 'Qadar' in 1992. A Masjid was also built on his name in 'Ain-us-Shams, Cairo.

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A. is regarded as the best and most gifted of Qaris which the Minshaawi family has produced. He is the one who has affected the people most. He surpassed his father, Sheikh Siddeeq Al-Minshaawi, who was his teacher and he also surpassed his younger brother, Sheikh Mahmood Al-Minshaawi.

Sheikh Muhammad Al-Minshaawi was the reciter in Masjid Zamalik since he was approved by the Radio Station in 1953. He remained on this position for about 15 years, until he passed away.

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi R.A.'s recitation of Surah al-Hujuraat and Qaaf in Masjid-ul-Aqsa is a pearl amongst the pearls of recitation. Similarly, he's Qiraat of Surah al-Hashr and Surah al-Ghaafir are very unique.

### **ILLNESS AND DEMISE**

Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq As-Sayad At-Taaib, who is famously known as "Muhammad Siddeeq Al-Minshaawi" began his journey to the hereafter in 1966 when he was afflicted by an illness. Towards the end of his life, whenever he read, his nose used to bleed. This was due to hemorrhage. No one saw him for the last three months of his life as he was very ill and stayed indoors. He left this

world on 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1969. *May Allah have mercy on him and grant him the highest stage in Jannah, Ameen.*  
Sheikh Muhammad al-Minshaawi lived for 49 years.

### **SHEIKH AS-SAYYID SIDDEEQ AL-MINSHAAWI R.A.**

At this point it seems appropriate that we should briefly discuss the life of Sheikh Muhammad Al-Minshaawi's father, Sheikh Siddeeq R.A. Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi was born in 1898 in Sohaag, Sa'eed (Upper Egypt). He spent his early days in the capital of his province which is Qina. He grew up to become very famous in the city and in the entire province. During his youth, he latched onto Sheikh Abulwafa Sharqaawi, and adopted his sweet and beautiful way of recitation.

A strange thing about him is that he refused to participate in *Ihyaa-ul-Layali* (nightly gatherings) out of Qina and Garga. He never recorded any recitals for the Radio Station too. There were many requests that he should record some recitals for the Station. Eventually, after 40 years, he agreed and a group of men from the Radio Station were dispatched to Qina to record Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi's recital. All this was despite the fact that he was *the* most famous Qari of his time in his area.

During his entire life, he neither accepted, nor agreed to any remuneration for his recitals. Once it so happened that he recited at the *Ma'tam* of a prominent person of Qina. As he was departing at the end of the commemoration, the brother of the deceased placed something in his pocket. Sheikh Siddeeq did not bother to see what it was. Upon reaching his home, he emptied his pockets and found that it was a '*Mallim*,' (A Mallim is the smallest monetary unit in Egypt, = 1/1000 of a pound). Very soon the person who put this into his pocket came to him seeking his forgiveness for this terrible mistake. He explained that he had a gold coin and this small coin in his pocket, and mistakenly he placed the wrong coin in the pocket of the Sheikh. Sheikh Siddeeq



refused to accept the golden coin, reciting the following verse:-

قل لن يصيبنا الا ما كتب الله لنا

"Say, nothing comes to us but that which Allah Ta'aala has written for us."

### **FAMILY OF SHEIKH AS-SAYYID SIDDEEQ AL-MINSHAAWI**

Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi had four sons;

1. Muhammad Siddeeq, the famous Qari of the Glorious Quraan, who was born in 1920. He was married to Nahlah and had eight children: Mahmood, Ameenah, Aslamah, Siddeeq, Taariq, Salwah, Haalah and Ghaarah.
2. Ahmad Siddeeq, who was also a Qari of the Glorious Quraan and possessed a very sweet voice, He was born in 1934, married Huda and had two daughters, Laylah and Nahlah.
3. Mahmood Siddeeq, the famous Qari of the Glorious Quraan in present times, who was born in 1942. He is married to 'Aliyah. His children are; Usamah who was born in 1968. Muhammad who was born in 1971. Ahmad who was born in 1972. Salwah who was born in 1974. Haalah who was born in 1975. Sideeq who was born in 1976. Ghaarah who was born in 1981 and Taariq who was born in 1983.
4. Haamid Siddeeq who was born in 1944. He lives in Cairo and runs a Madrasah. He is married to Zainab and his children are; Ahmad, Taariq, Muhammad and Ameenah.

Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi kept up to his word throughout his life and never went out of the boundaries of these two cities i.e. Qina and Garga, except on two occasions. Once when he was invited to recite at the *Ma'tam* of the great Qari, Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at in Cairo for three nights, and the second time was when a prominent person, Mr. Fahmi Umar, asked him to come to Cairo for some tests of his voice over the microphone. Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi passed away in 1984 at the age of 86.







No. 4

القارئ الجليل الشيخ  
محمود علي البنا

(رحمه الله)

Sheikh  
Mahmood Ali  
al-Banna  
Rahimahullah



## SHEIKH MAHMOOD ALI AL-BANNA رحمه الله

### BIRTH

17th December 1926 in "Shabrabaas" village, which is in the Shabin Al-Koom district in the Manufiyyah province.

He was brought up in the natural environment of Lower Egypt surrounded by beautiful sceneries and a good life. Most people here were farmers, who strove to live a noble and pure life by striving and working hard.

It was the dream of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna's father that his son should also grow up and help him with his work and business, as is the dream of every father. But when Al-Haaj Ali R.A. gave second thought to the future of his son and in a different light compared to the rest of the people of Lower Egypt, he came to the conclusion that the best and the easiest way of reaching Jannat is by obeying Allah Ta'ala, and by leaving behind a son who will keep on making Dua for him even after his death. This can never be achieved but by protecting the solid fort (of Islam) and the resources that can never diminish as well as the shining light, i.e., the Quraan-e-Kareem. Haaj Ali had realized this the moment he was blessed with this beautiful child who resembled the children of Jannah, because honour and grace had enveloped this child for whom Allah Ta'ala had already destined the memorization of his Quraan-e-Kareem. He thanked Allah Ta'ala for this that the child's beginning was a good one. He named him Mahmood, one of the names of Rasulullah Salallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam. After his birth, blessings and goodness came to the household, which were not witnessed before. Haaj Ali never withheld any thing when it came to assisting his son to memorize the Quraan-e-Kareem. This was so that he may be in the front row of the 'Ahlul-Quraan' who are the special and chosen ones of Allah Ta'ala (when they practice upon it).



When the youngster, Mahmood Ali Al-Banna reached his youth and peak, his father admitted him in the Maktab Madrasah of Sheikh Moosa R.A. in Shabrabaas. Sheikh Moosa was eager to teach this child Hifz and Tajweed because this was an outstanding boy upon whom the signs of eminence and being from the 'people of the Quraan and its special ones' were evident. His Makhaarij of letters and excellent pronunciations were unique, whereas he was only six years of age. Besides this, he was very intelligent and had a unique way of reciting the Quraan-e-Kareem. These were some of the outstanding qualities which Sheikh Moosa had seen in this student. At home he was also under the constant supervision of his parents. To be gifted or to have an excellent memory is not sufficient, but parental guidance is also very important in the upbringing and education of children.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna related the following incident about his childhood days in the Maktab;

"I used to be very eager to memorize what I had learnt during the day in the Maktab. I never slept until I had memorized my lesson, which had to be read to our Ustaad the next day. After memorizing the new lesson, I would revise my previous lessons so that I may recite all the lessons to our Ustaad. As long as I live, I will never forget the day my Ustaad gave me a good beating. This was not because of not having learnt my lesson. So when I returned home, I cried a lot and told my mother that our Ustaad beat my very severely although I read my lesson correctly to him. My mother then told me 'O Mahmood, the Ustaad hit you because I told him you went to the fields to see how the cotton was harvested and you were playing near the workers next to the field. . . and O my beloved son I feared that you will become involved in playing and lose interest in the Quraan-e-Kareem, and that the Quraan will distance itself from you. . . O my dear son I am worried about you and about your future, because you are in the line of being from amongst the 'Ahlul-Quraan', and you are not for anything but for the Quraan-e-Kareem. The Quraan-e-

Kareem is beautiful and by means of it, the person also becomes elevated.' That day I did not learn my lesson properly and the next day I was afraid of my Ustaad, therefore I stayed absent from the Maktab.

The prefect-who was a very tall boy- came and dragged me out of the fields and out of our house. I told him to wait so that I could take my bread roll and a piece of cheese, and wear my shoes. He told me 'No, there is no time,' I found this odd because no one from the house stopped the prefect or told him anything. That is when I realized that there is a connection between my family and my Ustaad. That is why the prefect came and dragged me out of the house. As soon as I entered the Maktab, the Ustaad began hitting me all over my body, on my hands, legs, head and back. I realized that my Ustaad is my well-wisher. After this he was good to me and advised me. He also promised not to beat me again and I promised him not to stay absent from class in the future."

The young gifted boy kept up his promise and was punctual and learnt very well. The signs of prominence soon started showing itself on him and eyes began focusing towards him, including that of the Ustaad and the students of the Maktab. People recognized him as someone great. He became an inspiration and a role model to many who wished to become like him. Upon the request of the students, he used to recite before them daily in his touching, beautiful, flowing, sweet, and emotional voice.

This request used to come daily from students as well as from the Ustaad, Sheikh Moosa who was very pleased with this gifted young boy. He knew that one day this student of his would be from amongst the gigantic Qurra of the Quraan-e-Kareem. All these things caused Sheikh Moosa to be even more vigilant and to pay more attention to him. He made him memorize the Quraan to such an extent that he was very fluent and recited with proper Tajweed. This was when he was only ten years old. He memorized the Quraan



in four years. The day Sheikh Moosa sent him back home as a Hafiz-ul-Quraan, the family of Haaj Ali Al-Banna was extremely happy and they made lots of Shukar and glorified Allah Ta'ala for this great bounty.

The young Mahmood Ali Al-Banna looked after this bounty of being a Hafiz and behaved accordingly, with dignity and tranquility. He kept himself far from amusement and entertainment. He portrayed a picture of a very matured and serious person. He devoted his life from this early age for the Quraan. People called him 'Sheikh' whereas he was only 12 years old. All this was because of the strict and disciplined upbringing of the parents and the Ustaad. Therefore, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna never objected to the hiding which his Ustaad gave him. Rather he indicated that a student sometimes needs to be disciplined in some way or the other.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned;

"Actually the present day system of nurturing has affected this generation and has spoilt them greatly. This nurturing is different from the nurturing we received. When we saw our Ustaad in the street, we would go down the other street so that he should not see us. We had a lot of respect and awe for our Ustaads. This kind of awe makes a person stand out later in life."

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna will never forget that Taufeeq (ability) came from Allah alone and that success was due to the strong Ta'alluq (connection) with Allah Ta'ala. When a person is sincere in everything then he will find the help of Allah with him in all avenues of his life. He was also well aware of the fact that the Glorious Quraan is a bounty and boon from Allah which had to be protected. Therefore, he held very firmly onto the Glorious Quraan and its teachings. He also remembered the little gathering which was held in his honour in their house when he memorized the Quraan and had mastered Tajweed. People had gathered from all the houses and brought gifts for the Ustaad and honoured

him as well. This made the Ustaad very popular amongst them.

#### **ENROLLMENT IN AL-MA'HADUL MINSHAWI**

It was the wish of Haaj Ali Al-Banna that one of his sons be an Alim of Deen, but due to unforeseen circumstances things turned out to be otherwise. He found that this hope of his was fulfilled through this pious son who carried his name into the surroundings of the Glorious Quraan and knowledge. He devoted special attention to this child, spent on him freely and served him in every possible way, because serving him was serving the Quraan-e-Kareem.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned;

"In 1937, my father went to 'Shabeen Al-Koom' to enroll me in the Deeni institute which was run under Al-Azhar Shareef. But I was refused admission due to my young age. One of my father's colleagues told him to take me to the Al-Minsahwi Institute in Tanta. They would accept me immediately as I was a Hafiz. Thus, my father took me to Tanta and I was admitted into the 'Al-Ma'hadul Minshawi.' I was very young, but the thing that gave me courage to stay there was that I saw many people turning towards me to listen to my recitation. I used to read before the masses in the style of Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at R.A. There were times when I was called to take part in various programmes to recite the Glorious Quraan. I was even invited to Masjid Al-Ahmadi. People regarded me as a miracle because I used to imitate the great Qurra in my recitation. When I was asked to imitate the gigantic readers like Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, Sheikh Muhammad Salamah, Sheikh AbdulFattah Sha'sha'ee and Sheikh Muhammad As-Saudi-a Qari who used to recite on radio before the era of cassettes- I would not hesitate at all, rather, I would be very happy to read like them. People used to encourage me to go on and on. I was only 12 years old at that time."

When he was 15 years of age, his fame had reached all the coastal areas. Soon thereafter he stopped imitating others



and developed his own style and became famous for this. Rapidly more and more people began loving him for his unique method and pleasant voice filled with angelic sweetness.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna has mentioned;

"The most important thing for a Qari is that he must be a very good Hafiz and a Mujawwid (one well versed in Tajweed). Also he must have a beautiful voice and the ability to imitate, because by imitating these great Qurra he will capture the hearts of the people immediately. And soon a time will come when he will develop his own style of reading and he will be recognized for his style. It is of utmost importance that he enrols in a Quranic Madrasah of his choice, where his heart is inclined to, where he hears his teachers reading and he follows their style. Then a time will come when he will develop his own method of reading and when anyone hears him they will immediately know it is so and so reading. I am not of the opinion that one should imitate someone else his entire life. It is necessary to develop ones own way of reading."

In Al-Ma'hadul Minshawi in Tanta, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna was recognized and was famous amongst the students for his beautiful voice and good presentation and strong pronunciation. This was the reason that all the teachers and students loved to listen to him. The classrooms in this institute were carpeted and each class could accommodate about 40-50 students. There used to be a special gathering every week where students filled one of these classrooms to capacity just to listen to their colleague reciting the Quraan beautifully, as if he is reciting in Jannah!

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned;

"Sheikh Husain Muawwidh was very strict when it came to the matters of the students. Once I was lazy and did not read Qira'at. He gave me a hard shot with the magazine which he held in his hand. So I sat down in front of a huge crowd of students and began reading, but soon I saw them

dispersing and going to their classes and I was left alone. Sheikh Husain told me; "Do not worry, continue reading." At the end of the year Sheikh Husain and Sheikh Muhriz Rahimahumallah mentioned to me; "O Mahmood, go to Al-Ma'hadul Ahmadi (in Tanta) and study Qiraa'at there. You could be a famous Qari and you could be reciting on Radio one day. So I went to Masjid Al-Ahmadi and studied Qiraa'at under the late Sheikh Muhammad Sallaam, who was always eager to examine the students who took enrollment here for their Hifz, Tajweed, correct pronunciation of letters, Makhaarij and proper presentation. When I passed all these tests, Sheikh Muhammad Sallaam accepted me. If one did not pass these tests he would not qualify to enroll in this institute."

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna stayed in Masjid Al-Ahmadi for two years, studying the sciences of the Quraan and the Qira'at tul Asharah by Sheikh Muhammad Sallaam. When he reached the age of 18, he went to Cairo, the city of 'Ilm and Ulama.

#### TO CAIRO

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned;

"I moved to Cairo in 1945 so that I could be near the great Qurra to listen to them and record whatever I liked of their recitation in my memory. Then I would return home and imitate what I had just heard one of them reciting as if I were him, especially Sheikh Muhammad Salamah who had captivated me by his beautiful voice and strong pronunciation. I said to myself: By sitting in front of these great Qurra, like Sheikh Muhammad Salamah, Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, Sheikh Saifi, Sheikh Sha'sha'ee, you are like a person who has just come out of primary standards and is advancing to university."

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna was recognized by great influential persons who were in charge of organizing programmes for the great Qurra. They contacted him because his beautiful voice and strong pronunciations



appealed to them. In addition to this, his good presentation, his self respect, his strong personality, his intelligence and good character made him beloved to the people. Many prominent and influential people became attracted to him. It was understood that in the future he will be from amongst the shining stars who recite the Glorious Quraan.

After this period he decided to stay on in the Shubra area of Cairo, where there were those who loved his art and voice. This was a happy moment for the lovers of Al-Banna's art, because now they could get more of his voice. These fans of his promoted him and arranged for him to recite in all the major Masaajid of Shubra. In this way more and more people came to know of him.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned in some of his discussions;

"I began my recitals in the Masaajid of Shubra in Cairo by the organizing of certain sincere friends. Many people came to know me and I began receiving invitations to 'Ihyaa ul Ma'aatim' (commemorating the night in a funeral), and to religious gatherings which were held by big and famous businessmen in Cairo. There used to be great competition amongst them especially when it came to choosing the Qurra for the event, because each one wanted to attract more crowds to his function. So there was tension and competition in everything from hiring the marquee, preparing it, lighting it, its location to the choice of Qurra. In those days the listeners and lovers of the Glorious Qurran were very sensitive when it came to listening to the Qurra, because one would walk a long distance on foot just to listen to the Qari of his choice."

In 1946, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna met one of the great masters and prominent persons in the field of tunes and melody, Sheikh Durwesh Al-Hareeri. Sheikh Durwesh assisted Sheikh Al-Banna with mastering the Maqamaat. By studying the Maqamaat, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna perfected and beautified his recitation further so that he

could take up his place and be on par with great Qurra of the Glorious Quraan.

#### **FROM THE 'MUSLIM YOUTH AGENCY' TO THE RADIO STATION**

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned;

"During one of my recitals in a Musjid in Shubra, a member of the 'Muslim Youth Agency' Mr. Abdul Aal As-Sayyid heard me reciting, he was impressed and liked my reading a lot. He then met me and said that he hailed from the same city as myself. I told him 'Yes, I am from Shubrabaas.' He informed me that he was from Zurqaan. He invited me to visit the 'Muslim Youth Agency.' I accepted the invitation and went there on the appointed time. He received me very warmly, then he introduced me to the president of the 'Muslim Youth Agency' Mr. Salih Basha Harb saying; "Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna is from my city, he is a Qari of the Glorious Quraan and possesses a beautiful voice." Mr. Salih Basha Harb said that every Tuesday night after Esha, an 'Ilmi gathering takes place here which is attended by many great Ulama such as Sheikh Darraz, Sheikh Khilaaf, Sheikh Sanhoori, Sheikh Shaltoot and Sheikh Baqoori. Salih Basha Harb then requested me to commence the gathering every week with a recitation of the Glorious Quraan. I was very happy and accepted this offer because I knew it will give me the opportunity to develop myself even more and excel in my reading. Thus I used to commence the gathering every week and it became known amongst all that I was the Qari of the 'Muslim Youth Agency.' I recall once when it was the beginning of a lunar year, a huge gathering was held in the Opera House which was attended by great Ulama as well as important personalities from in and around the city of Cairo. There were also many guests from the Arab and Islamic world. Amongst them were Sheikh Darraz, Ali Mahir Basha, Muhammad Bik Qasim- the manager of the Radio station, Mr. Abdullah Sanusi and Mr. AbdulKareem Khattabi, etc. The gathering started with the recitation of the Glorious Quraan. Thus Salih Basha Harb said "The person who will be opening the gathering tonight by reciting the Glorious Quraan is



Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna . . . " This programme was being aired over the radio, and because I was not approved by the radio as yet, the radio manager objected and said: "You have to be a Qari who has been approved of by the radio to read here." Salih Basha Harb realized what was going on and he told the Manager that Sheikh Banna is a very good Qari, he is the Qari of the 'Muslim Youth Agency' and this is the programme of the Agency, so let him recite. The station Manager agreed, and said "He will recite for five minutes only." I recited just one verse from Surah Taubah;

إِلا تَتَصَرَّوه لَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللهُ . . . إِلَى ... تَوَكَّلْ حَكِيم

(verse 40 ). The response which came from the gathering was amazing. They requested me to recite these verses again and again. After I completed, the people began applauding and showering me with Duas and praises etc. They requested Qasim Bik to forward me to the Radio so that I may be approved to recite thereon, and the radio authorities will have no problem after that. Qasim Bik and Abdul Ghani Salaam- who was in charge of the Islamic department of the radio, took my particulars so that they may arrange an appointment for me with the Agency of examiners at the station. By this time, I had already attained my Tajweed certificate from Al-Azhar and was amongst those well versed in Tajweed.

When I was informed of my appointment, I was very happy. I went to the agency at the appointed time and met with the president, Sheikh Shareet, who was a very dynamic Alim and very strict when it came to matters such as examining people for the station. Any one who passed through him was indeed very fortunate. During the examination, the panel of examiners somehow found out that I had already attained the Tajweed certificate from Al-Azhar, so they bombarded me with questions on Tajweed for two hours. After all this also, Sheikh Hasan Shaja'ee was not satisfied with what he heard and saw, so when his turn came to question me he played with different tunes and melodies and questioned me about them. It was as if he wanted to find out everything from me in the field of Maqamaat and complete three hours

of continuous examination in front of a panel who had actually wanted me to recite a few ayaat to them so that they could check my voice and style of reading, as I thought it would be! But it became clear to me that they wanted to listen to my recitation because they were enjoying my reading. The final outcome was that they all said to me; "الف مبروك يا شيخ محمود" (A thousand congratulations, O Sheikh Mahmood). I was extremely overjoyed, not only because I had passed, but also because I was only 22 years old!!!

I was the youngest Qari to be approved by the Radio Station after my brother and friend, Sheikh Abul Aynayn Sha'eesha' who was approved by the Radio when he was only 20 years old!"

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna's first recitation over the air was in the latter part of December 1948, when he was only 22 years old. He recited from Surah Hood;

وإلى محمود اخاهم صالحا . . . عليه توكلت وإليه أنيب

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna says; "A week after I was appointed by the Radio Station, I received a message from the Islamic faculty of the Station asking me to come to the studio to do the morning slot of the Quraan from 7:00 am to 7:30 am. I was given 1/8th from Surah Hood as my portion which I was to read over air. I was very excited and a bit nervous because I was going to recite along with other great Qurra. I revised the allotted portion ten times. I practiced it with all the rules of Waqf & Ibtida, the rules of Tajweed as well as all the rules of Qiraat as we had learnt from our Ustaad. I then heard the Qari reading prior to me over Radio. He stopped at the spot where I was to begin from.

I went to the studio half an hour before the appointed time because I hardly slept that night. I stayed awake the entire night holding the clock in my hand. Whenever I dozed off, I awoke with a jerk and the house maid used to tell me; Sleep O Sheikh Mahmood, I will wake you up. I told her, I am



Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna . . ." This programme was being aired over the radio, and because I was not approved by the radio as yet, the radio manager objected and said: "You have to be a Qari who has been approved of by the radio to read here." Salih Basha Harb realized what was going on and he told the Manager that Sheikh Banna is a very good Qari, he is the Qari of the 'Muslim Youth Agency' and this is the programme of the Agency, so let him recite. The station Manager agreed, and said "He will recite for five minutes only." I recited just one verse from Surah Taubah;

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I went to the studio half an hour before the appointed time because I hardly slept that night. I stayed awake the entire night holding the clock in my hand. Whenever I dosed off, I awoke with a jerk and the house maid used to tell me; Sleep O Sheikh Mahmood, I will wake you up. I told her, I am



worried that both of us might sleep till 8 o'clock whereas my Qiraat is at 7 o'clock. One hour before the time of Fajr I woke up, made wudhu, performed Salaah and drank tea. Then I went down, took a taxi and arrived at the studio. I felt as if it was on the tenth floor of the building, due my nervousness. I entered the receptionist's area and found the programme for the day by the engineer, Safiyyah. On it was written "We will be listening to Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna who is going to be reciting for the first time since his approval by the Radio."

As the time was drawing nearer for my recitation, I became more nervous. The engineer forwarded me to the microphone and I began reading. I felt that my voice was not coming out properly. I told her that my voice is not right. She replied that it is coming loud and clear over air. I could not believe this and went on to read. It was through the bounty of Allah Ta'aala that I performed well. I completed my 1/8th at 7:30. Because I was new, my turn to read on the morning slot came once in every six months. But when Allah Ta'aala wishes for something, it happens even without means. There were great Qurra like Sheikh Abdul Fattah Sha'sha'ee, Sheikh Ali Huzayyin, Sheikh Abul Aynayn Sha'eesha', Sheikh Abdul Azeem Zaahir etc. who used to be payed 6 to 8 Egyptian Pounds per session. Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at was payed 12 Pounds.

These Qurra heard that the Radio Station agreed to pay Sheikh Mustafa Ismail 16 Pounds, so they all stopped reading on air. This was to my advantage because I was new and did not worry about any remuneration. The authorities were forced to seek my help when the rest of the Qurra excused themselves. I was then reading three times a week. People began passing remarks that Sheikh Al-Banna is close to the Station Manager and he is his favourite. They were unaware of the fact that the Station wanted to conceal the matter about the other Qurra who had left them in a lurch. This is how it went on for approximately a month. Many times they contacted Sheikh Mustafa Ismail but he

was unable to be present because he was in Mansoorah for example, or Sheikh Damanhuri was in Damanhur which is very far from Cairo, so I was their nearest and their best bet."

It was from here that the fame began, not only of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna, but also of Shabrabaas and Shabeen al-Koom. There was one person who was the happiest about all of this. . . whose happiness, if put on one side of the scale would outdo the happiness of the rest of the people. . . it was the mother who bore this person with the beautiful and charming voice. She felt as if she had the entire universe in her control when she used to hear the 'piece of her liver' reciting over air. She felt coolness and contentment in her heart.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna mentioned; "When I returned home and asked my mother if she was pleased to hear me reciting over radio she replied; *"O my son! I used to make Dua for you to be granted the Taufeeq (divine ability) and I cried when I heard you reciting, O Mahmood, O my Son!"* Mothers are a great blessing. I remember the time when the Radio used to play the recordings of my (Hadar) recitation, my mother used to listen to it then tell my brother AbdulHadi who used to stay with her at the time, " Switch off the radio, my son. Your brother has tired me, I get overwhelmed by every word he reads, and I cannot take it."

#### **AL-MUS'HAFUL-MURATTAL AND THE INCIDENT OF ITS RECORDING**

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna had recorded a complete set of the Quraan for the Radio's broadcasting. He possessed the most beautiful voice which cannot be described except with words; MASHA-ALLAH. Government officials began calling Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna for their various gatherings.

In this regard he was once invited to the 'Ma'tam' of the late father of President Gamal Abdul Nasir Husain. The head of



the radio station phoned him and told him that he and Sheikh AbdulBasit should go to Alexandria to recite in the pavilion in the 'Taryanunu' grounds.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna says;

"We reached there at 3:00 p.m. and had our turn to recite after Asar. Then Sheikh Husri, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Muhammad Minshawhi and Sheikh Yusuf Bahtimi joined us. After the event, the Qurra returned to Cairo the same day. I stayed on in a hotel and went to the president's father's house the following day. Here president Gamal mentioned to me; O Sheikh Mahmood, May I hear you reciting Tarteel (Hadar)? Upto now, Sheikh Husri was the only one who had made a 'Hadar' recording. Anyway, I recited in front of him for 10 minutes (in the Hadar mode). Thereafter, the president's secretary asked me; "Why don't you record a Mus'haful Murattal for the Station?" I said, "If they ask me, I will record it for them." He replied; "We will contact them." After two months I received a message from the head of the Deeni faculty of the station requesting me to record the complete Quraan set for the station. This was in 1968. I completed this recording of the Quraan in less than 50 days. This recording was then broadcasted over the air. By this time Sheikh Abdul Basit, Sheikh Muhammad Minshaawi and Sheikh Mustafa Ismail had also recorded their sets and all of our sets used to be broadcasted over air."

Whenever Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna used to enter the studio to recite he would ask the manager, "How long must I read for?" He would be told that he must read for 29 minutes. Mr. Abdul Kamil, the administrator of the Radio says that when 29 minutes were up, Sheikh Mahmood used to complete his recitation without going one minute overtime.

#### **RECITER OF THE MAIN MASAAJID OF EGYPT**

After his approval by the Radio, he obviously became very famous world wide. He held a high position amongst the

Qurra as well as in the hearts of the people. He was always chosen to recite in the main Masaajid which were attended by dignitaries from abroad. This was because of his beautiful recitation and angelic presentation.

He used to recite the weekly Jumu'ah Qiraat for five years, in the 1950's at Masjid-ul-Malik in Hadaicul-Qubbah. Thereafter, he was moved to Masjid Ahmad Rifa'ee to recite on Fridays. Here too, he recited for five years. During these years huge crowds of his fans used to follow him to listen to him. After that he was moved to Masjid Ahmad al-Badawi in Tanta. In 1980 when Sheikh Mahmood Khaleel al-Husri passed away, then Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna was moved back to Cairo to recite in his place in Masjid Husain. He recited here till the end of his life.

#### **PROMINENT FRIENDS INTERNATIONALLY**

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna was close to the authorities because of his fluency in speech, strong personality, gentle character and unique ways towards those around him. He developed a strong friendship with the late president Gamal Abdul Nasir after he recited at the funeral of his father in 1965. President Abdul Nasir liked his voice and unique way of recitation.

When the president passed away, then Anwar Sadat came to power and he used to attend all the commemoration ceremonies held for the late president. Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna used to recite at all these ceremonies and President Anwar Sadat really liked his reading and way of presentation. They developed a deep friendship which was because of the Glorious Quraan. This friendship benefited the Qurra greatly. . . because a delegation of the Quraa i.e., Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna, Sheikh AbdulBasit, Sheikh Abul-Aynayn and Sheikh Ruzaiqi went to the president for assistance in establishing a Union for the Qurra. President Sadat helped them in every possible way and removed many obstacles which were in their way.



These were the efforts of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna which are remembered and appreciated. After all his struggles for establishing this Union, he forwarded his friend, Sheikh Abdul Basit to become the first Leader of the Union. This shows his humbleness, and the meaning of the Ayat befits him perfectly wherein Allah Ta'aala mentions;

ويؤثرون على أنفسهم

*"They give preference to others over themselves."*

Sheikh travelled to many countries where the presidents and rulers always loved him and his unique way of reading.

#### **AL-BANNA AND SHA'RAAWI**

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna was very wise when it came to choosing his friends. His heart used to be inclined towards intellectuals and sincere people. He found these qualities in Sheikh Muhammad Mitwalli Allâh-sha'raawi. Their moments spent together were very interesting and beneficial, because when ever they met, they spoke about the Glorious Quraan and matters pertaining to Deen. Very seldom did they speak about other affairs or worldly topics.

#### **SHEIKH MAHMOOD ALI AL-BANNA'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Al-Banna recited in many Masaajid outside Egypt. He recited in Masjid Al-Umawi in Syria, Musjid Al-Aqsa in Palestine, and in the Haramain of Makkah and Madinah. There were no limits to his journeys which he undertook to impart the Glorious Quraan. In a period of 40 years, he visited all the corners of the world wherever there were Muslims. Moreover, in the month of Ramadhaan, he would travel to Muslim states and propagate the Glorious Quraan. Many hard hearts softened through him and many people accepted Islam by listening to his recitation. Al-Azhar used to send him to attend many international seminars and conferences to recite the Glorious Quraan. The Ministry of Awqaaf would also send him regularly to participate in international Qiraat competitions. He used to receive continuous invitations from the kings, rulers and great

Shuyookh from the Arab world to participate in gatherings like the birth of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, the eve of Me'raj and the eve of the new Islamic year, etc. He was the best ambassador of the Glorious Quraan.

#### **FAMILY OF SHEIKH MAHMOOD ALI AL-BANNA**

Allah Ta'aala had blessed Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna with seven children, five sons and two daughters.

The sons are;

1. Shafeeq al-Banna.
2. Sheikh Ahmad al-Banna.
3. Muhammad al-Banna.
4. Ali al-Banna.
5. Shareef al-Banna.

The daughters are;

6. Naahid.
7. Aaliyah.

Amongst the children of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna is Sheikh Ahmad Al-Banna who had a strong and healthy nurturing, and a role model to follow in the form of his father. He has inherited from his father, the honour and respect which is in actual fact the honour and respect gained from the Glorious Quraan. He was born and brought up in a Quraanic household which was also enveloped with love and peace. He is the only one from amongst his brothers who has carried the title of 'Sheikh' which he inherited from his father. Another thing which he inherited from his father is the sweet angelic tone and voice.

After completing his studies, he never left his fathers companionship even once. He had the inclination of reciting from a very early age. He was very pleased to be his father's driver so that he may be with him all the time to benefit from him in the art of recitation and also to inculcate the many superior qualities which his father possessed. He also learnt how to meet and deal with different people from



his father. Yes, there were certain things which he learnt only after his father's death. . . these were the things which Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna did in secrecy so that his reward may not be lost by his Rabb. (i.e., the good actions which he did purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'aala).

The greatest thing that Sheikh Ahmad Al-Banna learnt from his father was 'obedience'. Obedience not only to his parents, but also to his off-spring, his family, his neighbours, and his friends. Over and above this, he was also obedient to the poor and the destitute. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Banna spent so much time with his father that they became like friends. His father encouraged him to memorize the Glorious Quraan.

His father used to tell him, "O Ahmad, your voice is very beautiful and sweet, and your pronunciation is perfect and strong, and your Tajweed will enable you to be a Qari of the Quraan. You will have fans and a following."

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna always advised his son, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Banna, and guided him throughout his life time. Together with this, his father was a practical example for all his sons to follow. He brought his children up in a healthy and pure manner. When Mr. Shafeeq Al-Banna speaks of his father, he perspires as if he is speaking in front of his father, although years have passed since his father has passed away. All the children of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna have good character and are respectable people. They are following the teachings of their father in their respective walks of lives. This is how the Ahlul-Quraan nurture their children with good and blessed qualities.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna lived on this earth but he possessed such qualities as if he was from the inhabitants of the heavens. If he had to reprimand his children for anything he would never say more than one word or he would give such a smile that showed his anger and this was

enough for them to understand what their father wanted from them. He was very just with all his children.

His eldest son is Shafeeq who is an engineer. He did not go into the field of Tajweed and Qiraat, because it requires special effort and it is a gift which is given to certain people only. Similar is the case with the second son, Dr. Muhammad who practices in Saudi Arabia. He is not practicing to gain material wealth or a title etc. Rather he is acting upon the wish of his father which was that his children must be such that they can serve the nation and be good to fellow men. They must be good and nothing but good must emerge from them.

His other children, Ali and Shareef who are accountants are also following the same footsteps. They are all truthful and upright in the matters of their business, acting upon the advice of their father, that is, to be easy with their clients and not to burden them. They must be conscious of Imaan and good character. This is witnessed if one goes to visit them at their showroom, "SHAREEF AL-BANNA - FOR CARS" which is situated at 43 Ibrahim Saalim Street, Salah Saalim Rd. behind Masjid Sayyidah Safiyyah next to Darul-Quwwat in Heliopolis, Cairo. Similar is the case with Qari Ahmad Al-Banna who is the manager of the "SHEEN TRADERS" company which is situated at No. 34 Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna building, Sheikh Ali Mahmood Street, in front of the Heliopolis hospital in Heliopolis, Cairo. This business enterprise of Sheikh Ahmad al-Banna does not, and will not occupy him from attending gatherings and memorial services at night wherein he recites. Also he accepts invitations from around Egypt and internationally to go and recite there in the blessed month of Ramadhaan.

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna's two daughters, Naahid and Aaliyah are both accountants and are married. They are encouraging their children (the grand children of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna) to become Hafiz-ul-Quraan.



### DEMISE OF SHEIKH MAHOOD ALI AL-BANNA...

... "فراصة المؤمن". Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna had this quality since childhood, and it stayed with him till his death. Just before Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna passed away in hospital, his desire was to see his friend Sheikh Sha'raawi. He expressed this desire to those around him, so that the two friends could have a final look at each other, and so that Sheikh Sha'raawi could read some Qurran upon him and bless his soul.

Obviously Sheikh Sha'raawi did not know that his friend wanted to see him at that moment. Rather 'the call of Umar R.A. to Sariyyah' made him hear this request of his friend. Sheikh Sha'raawi was away at this time, occupied with some matters at the coastal area of the Red Sea. When Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna requested to see his friend, it was told to him that he is away at the Red Sea which is very far. Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna said he has just returned now. When the people went to inquire about the whereabouts of Sheikh Sha'raawi, they found that the Sheikh had just returned from his trip. He had received a silent message in his heart from his friend. He immediately went to the hospital and sat next to Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna and tears flowed from his eyes. His heart was saying that "The eyes are tearing and the heart is saddened and we are very sad at your departure, O Mahmood."

Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna bequeathed his friend to follow his funeral. The Sheikh did not utter anything except for the words of the Glorious Quraan, "إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ"-INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAJI'OON," and the soul of his friend left . . . and went to its Creator. After bidding him farewell, Sheikh Muhammad Mitwalli Al-Sha'raawi returned to Shabrabaas, making Dua for his friend all the way back; "O Allah! Reward him for every word that he had recited, and make the Glorious Quraan a Noor for him so that he may walk in its light".

A few days before he passed away, he asked his son Ahmad to get a pen and paper and told him "Write that which I dictate to you." He made him write many things, amongst which was a phrase that mentioned about his life being till 60. His son Ahmad asked why I should not write 80. He replied "O my son, my age has stopped and my time is near. . ." he then made him write about distributing his belongings according to the Shari'ah etc.

Thereafter, he asked them if they have anything else to say. All his children began weeping. At this point he requested them to place a Quraan cassette with him so that it may accompany his Janazah and he may get solace out of it in his grave. After this his gaze was fixed on the ceiling of the hospital and he began describing the proceedings of his funeral from the very beginning. . . that the Janazah Salaah will be read upon him in Masjid al-Husain (where he used to read weekly on Fridays), right to the point where he will be buried in a graveyard which he made in his life time next to the Islamic Centre in his village, Shabrabaas. . . he had even mentioned how his Janazah will be buried and his brother will be standing in a corner and weeping, and other people will be weeping too. . . he mentioned the scene in detail. That is exactly how it all happened the next day! They buried him 'in the graveyard in the precincts of a Musjid which he had built in his life in Shabrabaas, Manufiyyah.

When I had the opportunity to visit Cairo in December 2003, I went to visit Sheikh Ahmad Al-Banna at his residence. During our discussion, I asked him to mention something about his father.

He related the following; "My Marhoom father used to read from his heart, purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'aala. He once went to Germany where very few people used to gather in the Masaajid to listen to his recitation. One day, an Egyptian there asked him, "O Sheikh, we have seen you reading in front of thousands of people back in Cairo, and



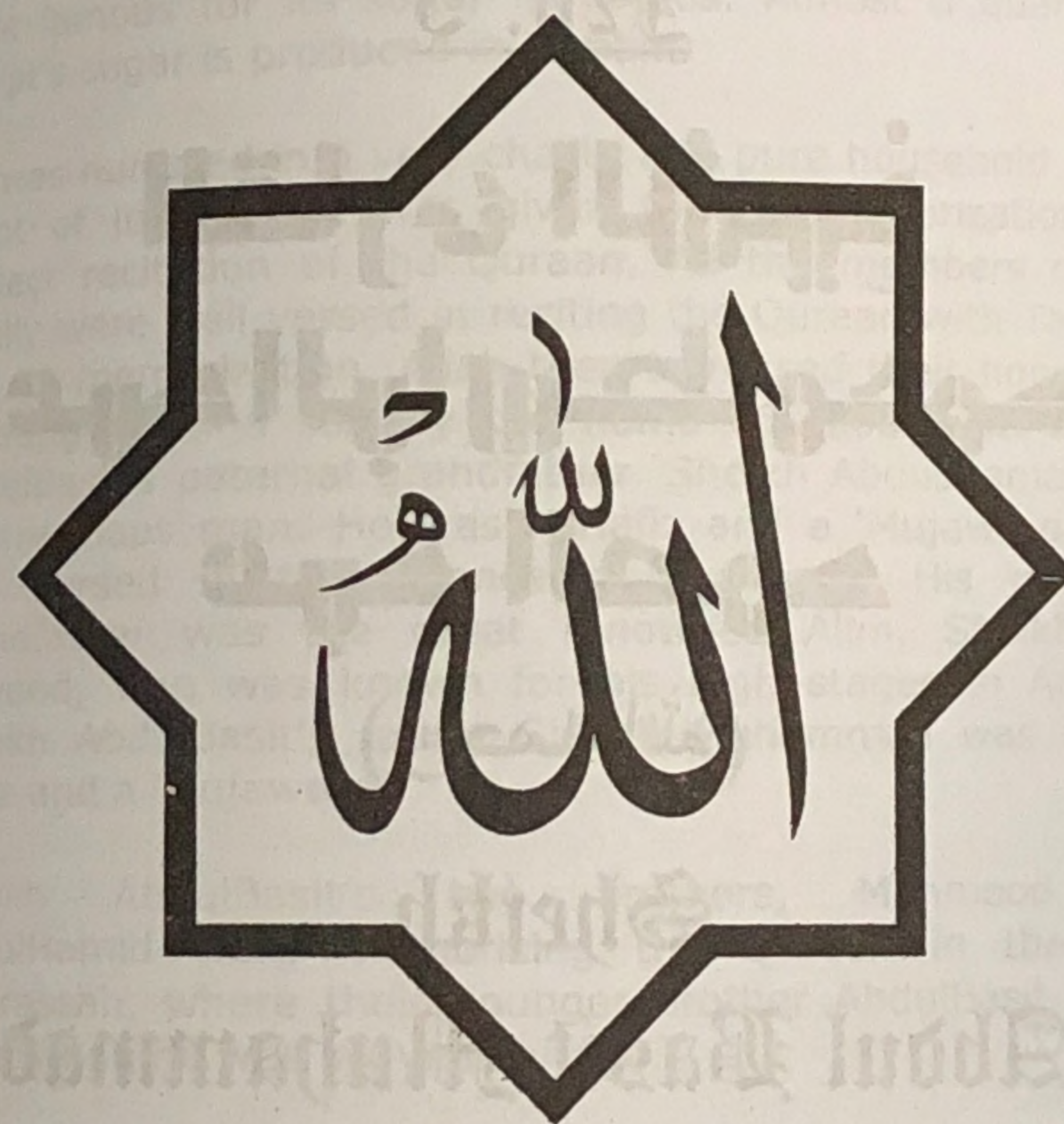
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here in Germany the numbers of Muslims are very small so the crowds are small too. How do you feel about this?" He replied, "I have a message to convey from Allah Ta'aala. Whether there is one person or a thousand, it makes no difference to me."

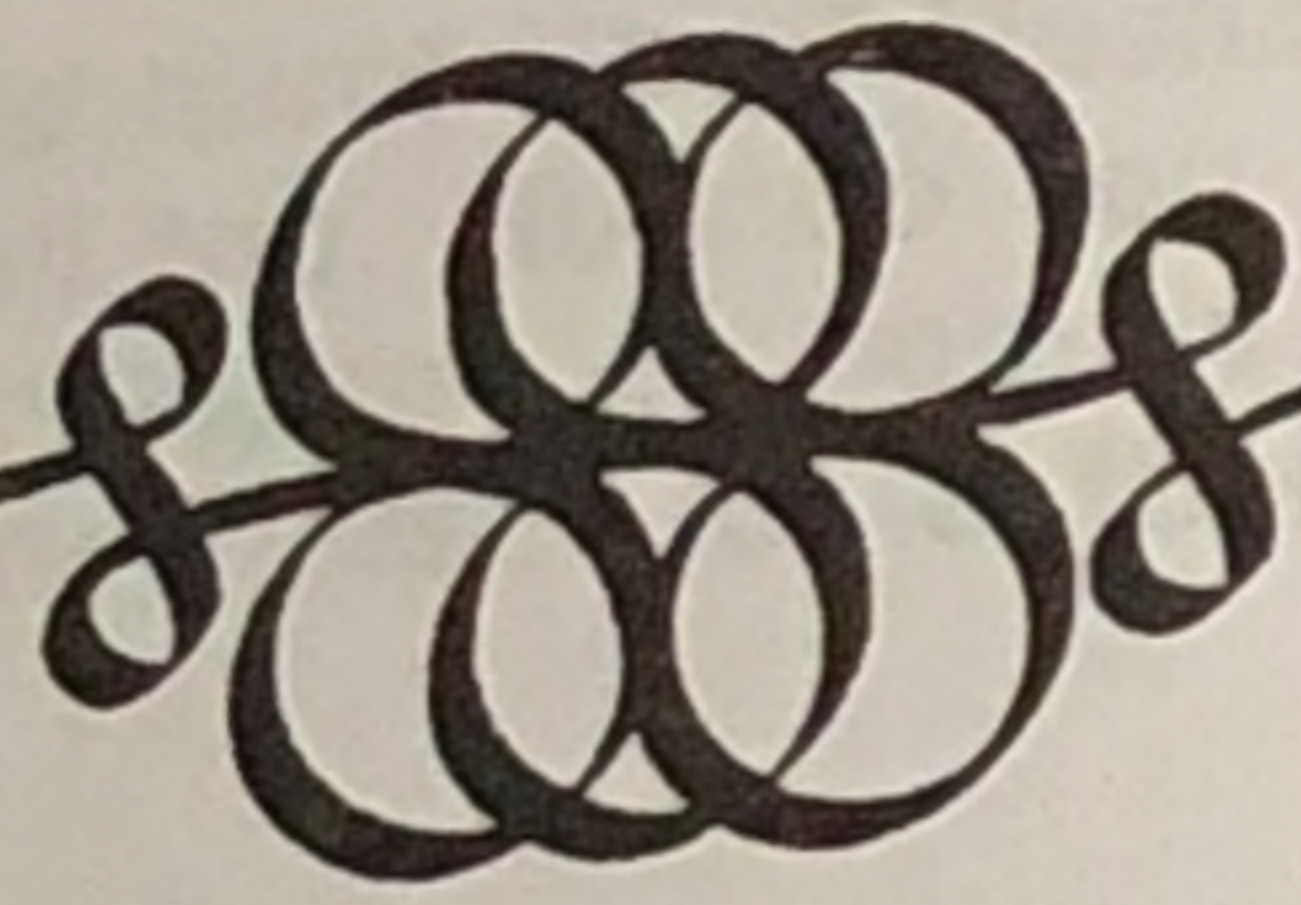
He passed away in 1985 due to cancer. This was only diagnosed when he returned from Abu Dhabi where he went on a Qiraat tour and had recorded the entire Quraan for the radio station. When he returned from there, he was not feeling too well. We took him for a check up and the doctor informed us that he is suffering from cancer. We could not believe this and told the doctor that he has just returned from Abu Dhabi where he used to recite the Quraan daily. The doctor could not believe this because the cancer was very severe. He remained in hospital till he passed away. I was very close to my father and I miss him a lot. I was about thirty when he passed away. I spent a lot of time with my father since childhood. Later I used to drive him around. In fact, when he was recording the Mus'haful Murattal for the *Izha'atul Quraanil - Kareem* I had accompanied him for almost all the recording sessions."

#### **THE STATE HONOURED SHEIKH MAHMOOD ALI AL-BANNA...**

After his demise the state awarded a medal of the first grade to his name in a gathering on the eve of 'Qadar' in 1990. His eldest son Shafeeq Mahmood Ali Al-Banna accepted this on behalf of his late father. The Sohaag province named a new town after him in Sohaag. Al-Gharbiyyah province named a main road after him which runs along the Masjid Al-Ahmadi in Tanta. Similarly, a street was named after him in Cairo.



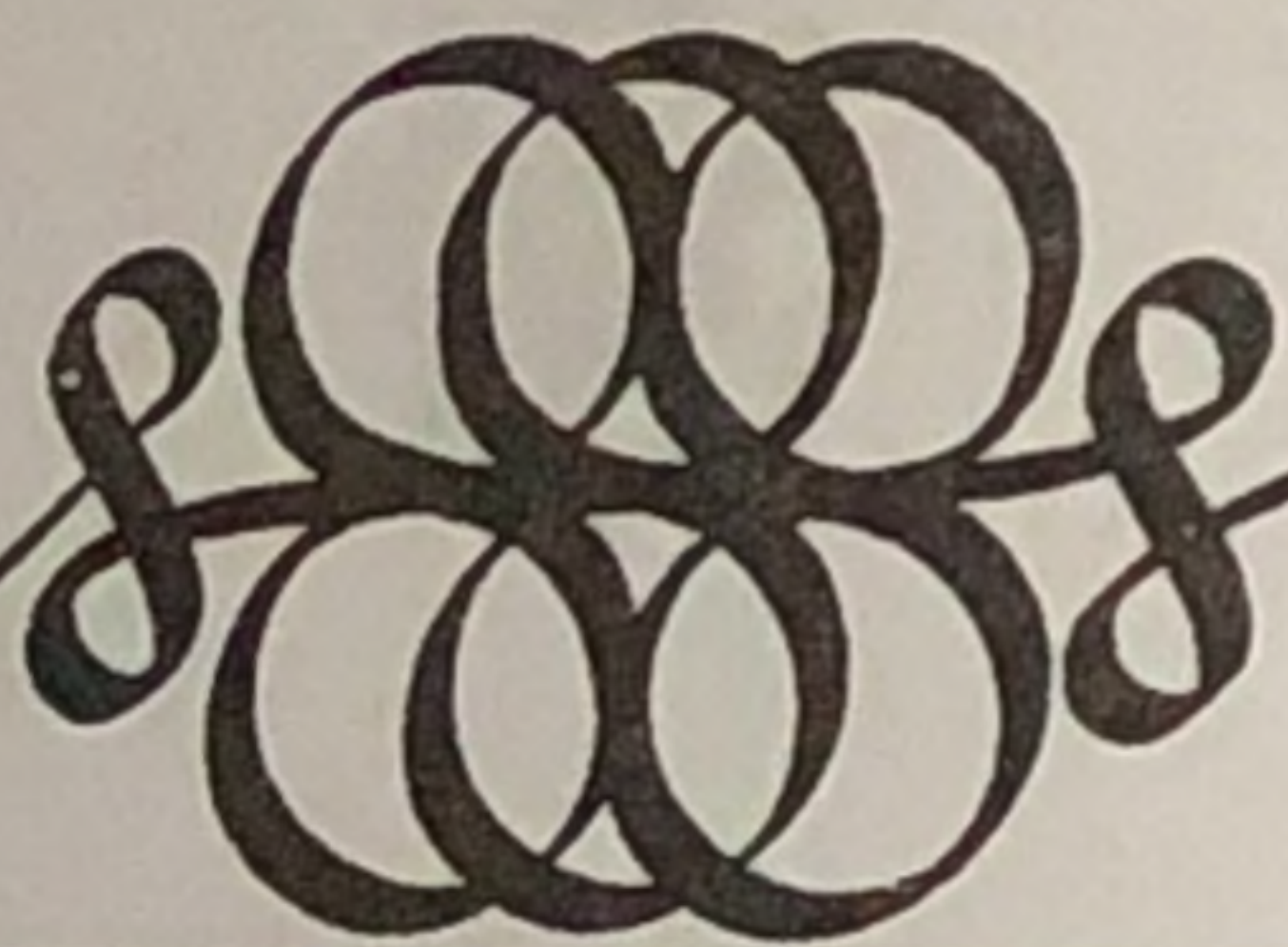




No. 5

القارئ الرشيد  
عبد الباقى محمد  
عبد الصمد  
(رحمه الله)

Sheikh  
'Abdul Basit Muhammad  
Abdus Samad  
Rahimahullah



## SHEIKH ABDUL BASIT M. ABDUS SAMAD

رحمه الله

**Birth:** Beginning of January 1927 in "Muraza'at" a village in the city of Armant, this is in the province of Qina. Armant is an ancient city and its history goes back a thousand years. It is famous for its sugar industries. Almost a quarter of Egypt's sugar is produced in Armant.

He was nurtured in a very chaste and pure household where a lot of importance was given to the memorization and correct recitation of the Quraan. All the members of this family were well versed in reciting the Quraan with Tajweed and its memorization. Allah then increased their honour by granting them a son by the name of AbdulBasit. Sheikh AbdulBasit's paternal grandfather, 'Sheikh AbdusSamad was a very pious man. He was a Hafiz and a 'Mujawwid' (one well versed in the science of Tajweed). His maternal grandfather was the great renowned Alim, Sheikh Abu Dawood, who was known for his high stages in Armant. Sheikh AbdulBasit's father Sheikh Muhammad was also a Hafiz and a 'Mujawwid'.

Sheikh AbdulBasit's two brothers, Mahmood and AbdulHamid were memorizing the Quraan in the local Madrassah, where their younger brother AbdulBasit joined them when he was six years of age.

Al-Haaj Sheikh AbdusSamad desired that at least one of his sons become an Alim and a Faqeeh of Deen. He had a lot of hope in his son Muhammad, (father of Sheikh AbdulBasit). But due to unforeseen circumstances and the means not being available, Al-Haaj Muhammad could not accomplish this and was working for the telecommunications department in Upper Egypt. This occupation did not prevent him from learning the Quraan with his sons when they returned from the Madrasah of Sheikh Al-Ameer in Armant. Al-Haaj Muhammad knew well that the real fortune and



expensive treasures which can never end, and the rivers of which can never dry up is the wealth and the treasures of the Quraan, and the beauty to which there is no parallel is the beauty of the Ayaat of the Quraan. Therefore, he chose for his sons to become people of the Quraan, so that they may lead a life which is shaded by the Quraan. Thus he sent them forward for the cause of Islaam so that he may have no regrets on the day when he meets them in the hereafter. Al-Haaj Muhammad's family is known as the أهل القرآن "the family of the Quraan." Their house is known as "the house of the Quraan". They are أهل الله وخاصته **"The family of Allah and His special ones."**

Young AbdulBasit joined the Madrasah of Sheikh Al-Ameer in Armant where the Sheikh welcomed him very happily and warmly, because he was an embodiment of every kind of Quranic capability, which was further polished and refined by the constant listening of the Quraan being recited in his house morning and evening. He was from that household into which the river of the Quraan was flowing. So it was obvious that he would be an expert and well versed in the Quraan. He heard and saw the tongues of those around him always moist with the recitation of the Quraan. . . he followed suite and also memorized this Kitaab. It was obvious that Sheikh Al-Ameer was very much attached to, and loved this pious youngster who was a gift to one and all. He gave him special care and attention because he knew that this child had a great future. Sheikh Ameer also noticed that this child is different from others in that he grasped his lessons rapidly, he was always alert, always anxious to emulate his tutor, had total control over his pronunciation (Makharij) of letters and 'Waqfs' and 'Ibtida' (stops and beginnings), and possessed a sweet voice. Sheikh Ameer took him to be a gem which had to be protected. This was the kind of love and relationship between the Ustaad and student.

Sheikh AbdulBasit completed his Hifz before the age of ten. The Ustaad did not suffice on this and told Sheikh

AbdulBasit's father that now he had to do Dor (revision) of the Quran and requested him to stay on, thus he carried on studying there and used to recite in his sweet voice for the students and teachers upon the request of his Ustaad.

Geographically, Armant was not a big city as far as its inhabitants were concerned. There was only one radio in the entire city in those days, and this too, was owned by a shopkeeper. Sheikh AbdulBasit used to walk to this shop which was at a distance of about three kilometers, merely to listen to Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at's recitation over radio. He then returned home and used to imitate what he had just heard Sheikh Rif'at reciting, in exactly the same strong voice and powerful pronunciation. Those who heard him reciting used to stop and listen attentively. People began calling him "Sheikh" whereas he was only twelve years of age. He became "the talk of town." In fact people began mentioning him to others and it was known that he will have a great future and a marked place amongst the Qurra', because he began learning since childhood. He's father made sure that he studies the laws and all the related sciences of the Quraan so that he may be on par with the great Qurra when he recites the Quraan, because a person with a beautiful and sweet voice needs to know the rules of Tajweed and laws of the Quraan as well.

A certain Aalim of Qina advised Al-Haaj Muhammad to take his son, AbdulBasit to the coastal area in Tanta to study Tajweed and 'Uloom-ul-Quraan at the hands of Sheikh Muhammad Saleem Hamadah. This was very difficult for the father as well as for the rest of the family. It was most difficult for Sheikh AbdulBasit himself, because he was of that age where he was bonded with his family, friends, and things around him. How could he leave his family and home and go to the coastal area? How could he go alone to a foreign place whereas he was only twelve? But because the father was from amongst the people of the Quraan, he was contented that this place was not far and strange. Actual strangeness is when a person is amongst his family and



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people but is not guided correctly. So the father did not consult with anyone and made a firm intention and relying on Allah, decided to send the 'piece of his liver' to Tanta to study Uloom-Ul-Quraan and Qira'at. He took this as a migration towards Allah and his Rasul Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam

But Allah, who knows the conditions of the hearts, planned otherwise and caused Sheikh Muhammad Saleem Hamadah to move from Tanta to Armant before Sheikh AbdulBasit could go to Tanta.

Sheikh AbdulBasit related this incident saying;

"I was over ten years of age and had memorized the Quraan to such an extent that it used to flow like a river from my tongue. My father was a worker at the telecommunications and my grandfather was an Alim. I mentioned to them that I wanted to study Qira'at so they advised me to go to Tanta, the coastal area. Here I could study Uloom-Ul-Quraan and Qira'at at the hands of Sheikh Muhammad Saleem Hamadah. The distance between Tanta and Armant was very far. But my future was decided and I began preparing for this journey. One day before I left for Tanta, we learnt that Sheikh Muhammad Saleem Hamadah has come to Armant to settle down and to teach Qira'at in the Deeni Institute of Armant. The people of Armant welcomed Sheikh Saleem Hamadah very warmly because they knew his status. I went to him and revised the entire Quraan by him. Then I memorized "Ash-Shatbiyaah" (A book on the seven Qira'at in a poetic form)."

After this Sheikh AbdulBasit began receiving invitations from all the villages and towns in and around Qina. This was more because of his Ustaad, Sheikh Muhammad Saleem Hamadah's encouragement and anxiousness to send the young student forward and making his name known to people. Wherever he went with the Sheikh, he (the Sheikh) praised and popularized him.

Al-Haaj Abdulhamid, the brother of Sheikh AbdulBasit mentions;

"AbdulBasit loved reciting the Quraan since childhood. We all noticed this. My father sent myself and my brother to Cairo to study in the Al-Azhar University, and he kept AbdulBasit in Armant to guard the gift which was flowing from him since childhood. Amongst the things that urged Sheikh AbdulBasit to recite the Quraan was the affection and love of the people towards him when he recited the Quraan with perfect pronunciation and a sweet voice. He was invited to recite in gatherings of nikahs, mayyits and many Islamic programmes in Qina and Sohaag etc. whereas he was only thirteen years old. People became very attached to him and he became very famous."

#### **HIS VISIT TO MASJID SAYYIDAH NAFEESEH R.A. ON THE OCCASION OF HER MEMORIAL**

When Sheikh AbdulBasit was fifteen years old he was like the other great Qurra. He's fame was acknowledged as far as Luxor, Aswan and many other towns around Cairo such as Minya, Bani Suwaif etc. He spent almost ten years reciting the word of Allah in and around the cities and villages of the southern part of 'As-Saeed' (Upper Egypt). In 1950 he travelled with some relatives to Cairo to attend the commemoration event of the great-granddaughter of Rasulullah ﷺ, Sayyidah Nafeesah. This is an occasion where great and famous Qurra like Sheikh Abdul Fattah Sha'Sha'ee, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Abdul Azeem Zaahir, Sheikh Abul-Ainain Sha'eesha' and other stars of recitation recite. The young AbdulBasit intended merely to sit as close as possible and listen to these great Qurra recite live, because he had always been very impressed by their recitation. However, at that time he did not know that soon he too, will be from amongst them.

After mid-night when the Masjid was full of people who had come from all over Egypt to attend this gathering, a relative of Sheikh AbdulBasit sought permission from those in charge of the programme to allow the youngster (Sheikh



AbdulBasit) to recite for at least ten minutes. He was granted the permission, and taking his place on the 'Dikkah' (seat of reciting), began reciting from Surah Ahzaab amidst a huge crowd. On listening to his recitation the entire gathering was quiet and held spell bound, surprised at the talent of this young Qari who was sitting amongst the great Qurra. After a few moments the silence was broken and the crowd begun calling out *يا مشيع*, *ربنا يفتح عليك*, *الله اكبر* and many other words which emanate from the hearts of the lovers of the Quraan....and instead of a ten minute recital, it was extended to a lengthy one. The Musjid, its courtyard and the surroundings were filled to capacity with listeners who were listening to every Ayat recited in this gripping, touching, and angelic voice full of 'noor'. It was as if the gap between the sky and the earth was closed and it felt as if they were touching the throne of Allah closely. It felt like the angels were surrounding the gathering, carrying pillars of noor from Allah which had enveloped the Musjid of Sayyidah Nafeesah and had penetrated deep in the hearts of those present there. This atmosphere gave the young gifted Qari an opportunity to ignite a new melodious tune which was in addition to the melody of Dawood *عليه السلام* and Ibne Masood *رضي الله عنه*. This was the Sahabi who had the most beautiful voice which Nabi *ﷺ* heard many times. The sweet voice which made Nabi *ﷺ* tear was repeated on this night on the occasion of the memorial ceremony of the great granddaughter of Nabi *ﷺ*. The eyes of the reciter were tearing and the hearts of those present were gripped with ecstasy as this was the beginning of a new era in the channels of recitation.

After the recitation people applauded him and showered him with many Dua's. Sheikh AbdulBasit left the Musjid virtually being lifted on the shoulders of people because he had captured and penetrated their hearts. After this he became the third most famous voice to reach the ears of the people after the great and miraculous Qari, Sheikh Muhamamd Rif'at, and Ameerul-Qurra, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail.

This was a point in time when the history of the recitation of the Quraan changed and the lovers of the Quraan drew a new map of the famous Qurra with a new branch.

The gigantic young Qari became the talk of every person, especially the great Qurra who now prepared themselves to welcome a new star and to safeguard their own place on the map which was shaken from the side of Upper Egypt.

#### **SHEIKH AD-DABBA' FORWARDS SHEIKH ABDULBASIT TO THE RADIO STATION**

Towards the end of 1951, Sheikh Ad-Dabba' proposed to Sheikh AbdulBasit to approach the radio station, 'Izha 'atul Quraanul Kareem' to recite on its channel. Sheikh AbdulBasit postponed this proposal because he was attached to 'Sa'eed' (Upper Egypt) and to his family. He knew that the radio would require a set programme from him. But the planning and wish of Allah is above all planning. Sheikh Ad-Dabba' had a recording of Sheikh AbdulBasit's recital which he rendered on the night of the memorial ceremony of Sayyidah Nafeesa. He presented this to the officials at the radio station. They were all awe struck by the powerful and strong pronunciation.

By the end of that year he was approved to recite on the radio station. From here begun the journey of Sheikh AbdulBasit with the Quraan to every part of Egypt and to the rest of the world. People in every corner of the world started listening to him over radio. After the worldwide fame which he received within one month it became necessary for him to move with his family from 'Saeed' (Upper Egypt) to Cairo to an area around Masjid Sayyidah Zainab, to be from amongst the neighbors of the great granddaughter of Nabi *ﷺ* who was a means of his fame and him being approved by the radio. It was as if this was her gift to the entire universe and to the Muslims and to Islam.

Since Sheikh AbdulBasit joined the radio station, many people began purchasing radios. Almost all the houses had



radios to listen to Sheikh AbdulBasit's recitation. Anyone who had a radio in the neighborhood would play it on the loudest volume so that all the neighbors could hear Sheikh AbdulBasit while in their homes. Especially on Saturday nights, when Sheikh AbdulBasit had a fixed programme from 8:00 to 8:30 p.m. Up to this Day the recitals of Sheikh AbdulBasit are played on the Radio Station. Besides this, many other programmes and events used to be broadcasted time to time from main Masaajid wherein Sheikh AbdulBasit used to recite.

In 1953 Sheikh AbdulBasit was appointed as the official reciter at Masjid Al Imaam Ash-Shaf'ee R.A. He remained on this post for fifteen years, after which he was moved to Masjid Al-Husain following the demise of Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna in 1985. Sheikh AbdulBasit recited here for three years. His final Qiraat was rendered in this masjid on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1988.

Sheikh AbdulBasit was greatly influenced by the style and presentation of Sheikh Mahmood Hasanain Al-Kaluhi, one of the greatest reciters of Upper Egypt.

The author of 'Abaqira-tut-tilawah, Shukri Al-Qaadhi writes "The most common and beloved Surah of Sheikh AbdulBasit to me is Surah Yusuf. I always keep a cassette of it in my car and listen to it every morning. It carries me to the sky, nay above the skies! Especially when he recites the 4<sup>th</sup> verse of this Surah (wherein Allah says;

اذ قال يوسف لايه يا ايت ابي رايت احد عشر كوكبا والشمس والقمر رأيتهم لي سجدين

"When Yusuf (A.S) said to his father, O my father I have seen (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon prostrating to me.")

Is there any one who recites this verse better than Sheikh AbdulBasit?!!!

### **SHEIKH ABDULBASIT'S FRIENDS**

Sheikh AbdulBasit was a friend to one and all. Everyone loved his voice and was close to him all the time. Great Ulama, kings and rulers of the Muslim and non-Muslim world had honoured him and were his friends. Amongst them was Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi - Sheikh of Al-Azhar.

The Sheikh himself says;

"There was a very close and deep friendship between myself and the late Sheikh AbdulBasit, which was only for the pleasure of Allah. I have heard him reciting the Quraan in the most effective way. When I was a student, my companions and I used to gather around the radio every Saturday to listen to his recitation. It used to be like 'Eid' for us every week. Allah had intended that we become friends. So as time passed, we became acquainted and were together on many occasions. I used to benefit generally from him, because he was a man of knowledge. He was obviously a master in Tajweed and Makhaarij. His face was always radiant and pleasant. He used to spend a lot in charity, secretly and openly. He possessed the most wonderful character".

Another one of his close friends and fans was King Muhammad the fifth, Monarch of Morocco. He really loved the art of Sheikh AbdulBasit's recitation as well as his voice. He's wish was that Sheikh AbdulBasit should leave Cairo and settle in Morocco, so that he may recite the Quraan before him morning and evening. But Sheikh AbdulBasit humbly refused saying that he would never leave Egypt for as long as he lived. This relation too, was a very strong one, based on the love of Allah and the love of the kalaam (speech) of Allah. They were so close that whenever the king intended visiting Egypt, he would contact Sheikh AbdulBasit telephonically and inform him of his trip so that he could accompany the Sheikh when he went to recite the Quraan. He used to be very impressed after every recital. On one of his trips to Egypt, he visited the tomb of Sayyidah Nafeesah R.A. in Cairo. He then squatted on the floor near the



Mehraab and began reciting from the Quraan, his favourite book which he carried with him wherever he went. When Sheikh AbdulBasis began reciting he stopped immediately. With great reverence and respect he began listening to the Sheikh. Throughout the recitation he sat in humble silence and meditation. That Friday the king performed his Jumu'ah at the famous Masjid in the fort of Salaahud-Deen. He arrived 40 minutes before the time of the Khutbah especially to hear Surah Al-Kahaf from Sheikh AbdulBasis. His heart was close to the Masaajid and he was always desirous to hear the Quraan recited by Sheikh AbdulBasis. It was well known that the king of Morocco was a great friend of Sheikh AbdulBasis and took him to different Arab countries.

When Sheikh AbdulBasis was once asked about his memories with King Muhammad V, he interjected with feeling and said; "By Allah, I can never forget the wonderful memories with our demised brother. When he was in Cairo he would specially ask me to accompany him to various Masaajid which he visited and performed his Fajar Salaah in. On alternative days he would visit the Masaajid of Sayyidina Hussain, Sayyidah Zainab, Sayyidah Nafeesah, and Sayyidah Sakinah R.A. He was one who loved to be at these Masaajid at least an hour and half before the actual time of the Salaah. When he proceeded to perform Hajj, he took me with him. We were always together at the Haramain in Makkah and Madina. I usually recited Quraan between Salaatul Maghrib and Salaatul Esha. At times he read with me. I swear by Allah that whenever I recited at these sacred places, I felt as if I was in heaven!"

Sheikh AbdulBasis was asked if the honourable king ever requested him to recite any particular Surah or verse. The Sheikh put his hands on his cheeks, looked deep and replied; "He asked me to recite Surah Yusuf, and often he asked me to read the smaller surahs for he loved to read with me."

Upon returning to his country after one of his trips to Egypt, King Muhammad thought of having a complete set of the

Quraan (Mus'haful Murattal) in the narration of Warsh 'an Nafi' recorded in the voice of Sheikh AbdulBasis. This was in the 60's. Sheikh AbdulBasis did not hesitate and readily accepted the king's invitation to go to Morocco. King Muhammad sent a jet to Cairo to bring the Quraan and its reciter back to Morocco. One day after he arrived, Sheikh AbdulBasis requested the king to bring Sheikh Rizq Khalil Habbah from Cairo so that he may be present with him when he records the Quraan. (Sheikh Rizq Khalil Habbah is the senior most Aalim of the affairs pertaining to the Quraan and the Qurra.) The king abided to the request of the Sheikh and brought Sheikh Rizq over to Morocco.

Sheikh Rizq Says;

"Sheikh AbdulBasis began this recording, whereas he was not totally prepared for it, and all the prerequisites which are required for such a momentous task were not available. A miracle took place in the sense that Sheikh AbdulBasis completed the recording of the entire 'Mus'haf' within eleven days. The only words I could utter was "ما شاء الله لا قوة الا بالله" and I recited the "Mu'awwathatain" i.e. Surah Al-Falaq and An-Naas on the Qari so that Allah may protect him. By recording the Qur'aan in the Narration of Warsh, in *eleven days only*, Sheikh AbdulBasis made manifest of a miracle, because this narration requires much more time and effort. Generally it cannot be accomplished in less than six months."

When the king passed away, Sheikh AbdulBasis attended his 'Tabeen' ceremony. Hundreds of Moroccans wept like children as the Sheikh recited with feeling and grace.

#### **SHEIKH ABDULBASIS'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Of the thousands of Qurra in the Arab and Muslim world, Sheikh AbdulBasis was one of the leading ones. He was blessed with stamina and sensitivity. He had originality and a superb way of reading the Quraan. He was undoubtedly the most admired; most demanded and most traveled man in the field of reciting the Quraan.



He was amongst the outstanding men who possessed the Quraan and travelled with it throughout the world. He began his journeys of spreading the Quraan in 1952. He received many invitations from all over the world in Ramadhaan and out of Ramadhaan. He undertook more than a hundred journeys to spread the Quraan. He was the most famous Qari in the Arab and non-Arab world. Wherever he went, he was welcomed and received with great appreciation.

#### ➤ SAUDI ARABIA

His first visit out of Egypt was in 1952, just after he was approved to recite on Radio. This journey was to Saudia where he went with his father to perform Haj. Here he recited in the Harams of Makkah and Madina. When he recited in the Haram of Makkah, overlooking the Majestic Ka'bah he read the passages depicting the story of the Ka'bah. King Ibn Saud could not resist saying ALLAHU AKBAR. Indeed his voice was most fascinating. The most memorable instance was in Madina Munawarah. According to Sheikh AbdulBasit, he could swear that he really was in Jannat when he sat between the 'Raudha' (blessed grave) and the mimbar of our beloved Nabi ﷺ as he recited the passages of Surah Muzzammil, he was carried away. The state of ecstasy enveloped him and soared with him to the Unknown. The same was with the thousands who had gathered to hear him. He recited so beautifully that he was given the title of "صوت مكة" (Voice of Makkah).

Obviously the Saudi radio station took advantage of this opportunity which came to them without any difficulty on their side, and they requested Sheikh AbdulBasit to record some recitations for the station. The Sheikh did not hesitate and recorded many recordings for them amongst which is the "Mus'haful Murattal" (complete Quraan set) in the narration of Hafs 'an 'Aasim R.A. This he did for the independent Kuwaiti station as well. After this trip he went many times to the blessed lands of Makkah and Madinah.

#### ➤ PALESTINE AND JORDAN

Sheikh AbdulBasit spent the blessed month of Ramadhaan in 1384 Hijri (1965) in Jerusalem where he recited the Quraan in the sacred masjid of Al-Aqsa. He travelled through the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and recited in all the Masaajid in Amman, Nablus and Arbed, and after having his Iftaar dinner with the King Hussain of Jordan, he returned safely to Cairo to spend Eid-ul-Fitr with his family.

#### ➤ SYRIA

Sheikh AbdulBasit visited Syria several times. Each time he was welcomed with greater honour and applause. Syrians admire his recitation and whenever he travelled to Syria, it was correctly said "Syrians got an opportunity to get together as never before. They differ in every thing but not in Sheikh AbdulBasit and the Quraan." They describe his voice as "the Voice from Heaven." His recitations of the Quraan that were presented to the public through the Syrian Broadcasting Stations had its magical effect on the millions of listeners in the Muslim and Arab world.

The Administration Department of the Broadcasting Station of Syria recommended to the Syrian Government to award Sheikh AbdulBasit the 'Medal of Honour' after taking into consideration the anxiety and enthusiasm created by the Sheikh in the hearts of the people. The government awarded this to the Sheikh. Mr. Sabri Asaly, Prime Minister of Syria welcomed Sheikh AbdulBasit at his office, awarded him with the medal and congratulated him on his great power of recitation and good taste that he created in the hearts of the Syrian people for the Quraan.

#### ➤ HALAB

Sheikh AbdulBasit accepted the invitation from the community of Halab. He travelled to Damascus and from there by air to Halab. Thousands of people were waiting to welcome him at the Halab Airport. Many cars followed his limousine as it passed through the streets, jammed with smiling faces. The Masjid in Halab was overflowing with



people. The gathering was so large that even in the days of King Saifud-Daula Hamdani the Masjid never witnessed such a huge crowd. Not only the court yard and the out buildings, but the Minarets, roofs and roads were over flowing with enthusiasts of the Quraan. There was no exception for every child, every woman, and every man of Halab, together with those of the surrounding suburbs and cities from as far as Damascus turned out in their thousands. Over 2000 women found their place within the Masjid it self. *They all had come to hear "the voice from heaven"!!!* Sheikh AbdulBasit was only able to leave the Masjid only one and a half hours after the Jumu'ah Salaah. Men and women thronged the streets from the Masjid doors to have a glimpse of him.

#### ➤ ALGERIA

Sheikh AbdulBasit visited Algeria, the land of a million martyrs. His first visit to Algeria was when president Bin Bellah invited him to the re-opening ceremony of the 'Kitchawa' Masjid. This historic Masjid had been converted to a church and was used as a church for a hundred years. As the Sheikh recited the Quraan, thousands of people wept like children. They wept with joy! They wept with happiness!

#### ➤ IRAQ

He was the only Qari who had enlivened the nights of the blessed month of Ramadhaan in Iraq during the time of the late president Abdus Salaam 'Aarif. The late president was a great friend of Sheikh AbdulBasit and usually invited him to Iraq where he received him with great enthusiasm.

#### ➤ MALAYSIA

The most modern Masjid in Asia had been opened by the king of Malaysia in Kuala Lampur. It was officially opened with the Friday Jumu'ah Salaah. Sheikh AbdulBasit was the first Muqri to recite the Quraan at the opening ceremony of this Masjid before the Jumu'ah Salaah. Tanku Abdur Rahman, the Prime Minister of Malaysia presented a gold medal to Sheikh AbdulBasit after this ceremony which was attended by approximately 250 000 people.

#### ➤ INDONESIA

When he went to Jakarta, Indonesia, he recited in the biggest Masjid there. People had filled the Masjid to capacity. The courtyard as well as the surrounding area for several kilometres was crowded with over a quarter million people who stood and listened to his recitation till dawn!

#### ➤ PAKISTAN

When he went to Pakistan, the president received and met him as he was coming down from the stairs of the plane! In the great city of Karachi 100,000 Muslims rammed the square, streets and roofs of nearby buildings to hear him. Qari Zahid Qasmi, official state Qari of Pakistan remarked; "He is the most electrifying Muqri in the world!" Sheikh AbdulBasit used to be invited internationally for many Qira'at competitions and always took first position. In one such competition where he took first position, a Pakistani Qari had taken tenth position. Later, when the Pakistani radio interviewed this Qari he mentioned "I was very pleased to have been given the great honour of taking tenth position in a competition in which Sheikh AbdulBasit took first position."

#### ➤ INDIA

Amongst other places he visited was India. Here he was invited by a wealthy person to take part in a religious gathering. When he recited in the huge audience, they were looking down and tearing as they heard the Quraan being recited so beautifully and melodiously. Their hearts were affected by his sweet voice.

In the year 1400 A.H. when Darul-Uloom Deoband held its 'Sad Salah' (100-year anniversary) Jalsah, Sheikh AbdulBasit was also invited. Sheikh Abdul Mun'im al-Nimar who was the minister of the AWQAAF in Egypt and had been a lecturer at Darul-Uloom Deoband, insisted that Sheikh AbdulBasit accept the invitation of the Darul-Uloom. The Sheikh did so, and attended this historical gathering. The ceremony began with a recital by the honoured Sheikh.



Great 'Ulama and dignitaries from around the world were present on the stage as Sheikh AbdulBasit recited. Sheikh Abul Hasan Ali an-Nadwi R.A. described this gathering in the following words; "It was a little glimpse of the plains of 'Arafat."

When they returned to Lucknow, Sheikh Abul Hasan took Sheikh AbdulBasit to a seminar where he recited the opening Qiraat. This was the 'Moulana Azad Seminar', which was held in the Ganga Parshad Memorial Hall. A magazine article that followed later mentioned the following concerning this Jalsah; "The seminar function turned out to be a Qiraat Jalsah."

In a special interview with Sheikh AbdulBasit AbdusSamad in Lahore he mentioned; 'The greatest gathering that I ever saw in my entire life was the one held in Darul-Uloom Deoband on the occasion of the Hundred Year function, in which approximately five million people from around the world heard my recitation."

In the second session of this historical Jalsah, it was only the recitation of Sheikh AbdulBasit that was on the agenda, in which he recited the famous portions of the Glorious Qur'aan for almost an hour. He rendered his utmost and exerted himself fully during this recitation.

#### ➤ SOUTH AFRICA

Sheikh Abdulbasit was the first Egyptian reciter to visit South Africa. Notwithstanding the apartheid regime, he visited the country twice, once in 1966 and the second time in 1981. When he visited in 1981 with Sheikh Ahmed Shahaat Ar-Ruzaiqi, the government of South Africa somehow knew about his arrival and sent the media and journalists to meet and interview him as soon as he landed in the country. They questioned him about his opinion concerning the apartheid in the country. Many other questions were also posed. At every question, Sheikh AbdulBasit pointed towards his companion, Sheikh Ahmad

Ruzaiqi who answered all their questions with a lot of diplomacy and tact. By the end of this meeting, all these people respected him and realized that he is no ordinary man. Sheikh AbdulBasit's recitation in the country was a means of changing the hearts of the Muslim population in South Africa. He inspired them, giving them hope and spiritual strength to adhere to and be proud of Islam despite the conditions they were living in. He lifted their souls spiritually and they realized the power of the Quraan.

In 1966, it was Mr. M. A. Varachia of the Central Islamic Trust, who had invited the Sheikh. By doing this, he had initiated a very noble step. Sheikh AbdulBasit's recitals had inspired many to recite the Quraan correctly. He was overwhelmed by the response of the Muslim community, gathering in huge crowds and loving as well as appreciating every minute of his recitals.

Concerning his acceptance of the South African invitation, Sheikh AbdulBasit had mentioned "I was overwhelmed to hear that in South Africa there is a significant minority of Muslims who are living peacefully, enjoying religious freedom having their own Imaams and Masaajid, religious institutes, etc. I honestly felt it my duty to respond favourably despite my engagements. The Quraan has long been heard by the Arabs and it is now time that non Arabs and others in Africa got the chance to hear it. Besides, we do realize that the message and recitation of the Quraan is the invaluable treasure to all mankind." On the eve of his departure in 1966, a little brochure in the name of "VOICE FROM HEAVEN -- AL-QARI AL-SHEIKH ABDULBASIT ABDUSSAMAD" had been prepared by Marhoom Moulana Ismail A. Razzaaq, and Sheikh Ahmad Al-Sharqawi, giving people a glimpse of the honourable Sheikh's travels, activities, life and services. The students of South Africa had also prepared a wonderful farewell bon-voyage send off for the Sheikh.



In Africa he also visited Senegal, Nigeria, Somalia, Benin and Uganda where 92 Ugandans accepted Islam at his hands.

➤ **U.S.A.**

The first time he was invited to the United States was in 1967. The Islamic Center in Washington had extended this invitation to him. He visited more than fourteen states, reciting in each of them. The second time he visited the States was in 1981, and this time on the invitation of the Islamic Center in Los Angeles. He went once again in 1987 to attend the opening of the first Quraanic School in Washington. He recited in all the major cities of America. 30 Americans accepted Islam at his hands after hearing him recite!

➤ **LONDON**

He visited London in 1971 and made recordings for the Arabic division of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

➤ **RUSSIA**

Once the great Sheikh was asked if he ever witnessed or experienced anything extraordinary concerning the Glorious Quraan. He replied; "Yes! On one occasion, the president of our country had to go to Russia. After a meeting with the officials there, one of them told him, "Why are you a Muslim? Leave Islam and become like us, we will help you and your country." After a few years, he had to go Russia again. I received a message from the president saying that he wanted me to accompany him to Moscow. I was surprised . . . and thought to myself that AbdulBasit would be called to go to an Arab country, to the Middle East, to Pakistan or India where there are Muslims. Why am I asked to go to Russia where there are only Kuffar and no one believes in religion? However, I got ready and went with the president. After one of the meetings, the president told those who were present that this (indicating to me) is my friend. He will be reciting something before you. I began

reading . . . and I read from Surah Taha, the verses wherein Allah Ta'aala says;

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي (سورة طه ١٤)

"I alone am Allah, there is no deity besides Me, thus worship Me and establish Salaah for my remembrance" (Taha - Verse 14).

It was these very verses which had brought Umar رضي الله عنه into Islam. When I ended my recitation and looked up, I witnessed a miracle of the Glorious Quraan! I saw at least four of those sitting in front of me were tearing. Everyone was astonished. Our president asked the reason for their crying. They said "We do not know what he read, but it had such an effect on us that our hearts melted and tears flowed out of our eyes."

This was the miracle of the Glorious Quraan which I had seen. Those who do not believe in it, they do not know it, yet it penetrates their bosoms and affects their hearts as well."

Sheikh AbdulBasit visited Spain and a few other European countries as well. He had also visited the Maldives Islands.

Sheikh AbdulBasit did not restrict his visits to the Arab World and Islamic countries only, but he travelled the entire world, wherever there were Muslims.

He recited in the most famous Masaajid of the world. The Haramain (in Makkah & Madina), Masjid-ul-Aqsa, Ibrahimi Haram in Hebron, Masjid-ul-Umawi in Damascus, Jami-ul-Kabeer in Halab and in all the other major Masaajid in Asia, Africa, U.S.A. France, London, Italy etc. He attended various religious functions in Lebanon, Algeria, Morocco, Qatar, Bahrain Abu Dhabi and other Arab countries by government or personal invitation. There were times when he travelled as part of an Egyptian delegation accompanying senior Ulama of al-Azhar or ministers and government officials.



Upon returning from one of his European tours, he applied to learn English at one of the language institutions in Cairo as he felt he lacked the necessary skill to converse with people abroad. However, he only managed to attend four classes due to his various commitments and long term absence from the country.

### **SOME OF HIS HABITS AND WAYS**

Sheikh AbdulBasit loved eating different kinds of foods, but was very fond of meat. He never drank anything cold and preferred tap water saying that cold water harms the vocal cords. Before recitals he had the habit of drinking one cup of coffee and nothing else. He used to retire to bed late at night due to his appointments. He would wake for the Fajar salaah and thereafter would sleep again till nine o'clock. Upon awakening, he would have a good breakfast. He also made a point of sleeping two hours in the afternoon. Overall he slept for about nine hours a day.

He also loved swimming and with this in mind he bought a private villa in Alexandria in the late sixties. He spent the summers there with his family whenever he got the opportunity.

He had a good relationship with all his peers and had nothing but kind words for all. He was very fond of Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at. He also developed a good relationship with Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, loving his mannerisms and admiring his style, saying that he possessed a unique voice and presentation. He listened to Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at and Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, but managed to develop and maintain his own style throughout his life. He never criticised anyone. Whenever he was asked for his opinion regarding a new Qari, he would always respond with complimentary words. He was a gentleman!!!

From close observation Sheikh AbdulBasit was known to be a very charitable man. One of the famous Qari's once confided, that Sheikh AbdulBasit recites the Quraan every

Friday at the Imaam Shaf'ee Musjid. He never accepts remuneration, but is obliged to accept the few pounds offered by the Musjid as a gesture of gratitude for his invaluable service. Sheikh secretly distributes the sum amongst the poor and often pays further sums for the microphone and the electric system of the Musjid! Very often he was seen distributing funds amongst the poor. Sheikh AbdulBasit was not only the magical name of a heavenly voice, nor was it his only characteristic, infact he was endowed with superb qualities of refinement and discipline which had won him much fame in the Arab and Islamic countries he visited. Wherever he went he was received with respect and dignity. Sheikh AbdulBasit was a great Quraanic recitalist and a man of sterling character. Sheikh AbdulBasit was very modest, kind, simple and a soft hearted man. He never forgot his friends however rich or poor they may be. Fame, fortune and adulation of millions and the honours showered on him by kings and princes of the Muslim people did not change this great man. He remained a pious, humble and lovable person, ever conscious of the fact that his is a heaven-sent talent to be used only for popularizing the Quraan and its teachings. Seldom did he talk about his achievements.

Once he was asked; "Who is the best Muqri?" He replied; "A Muqri is a person who reads and recites the Quraan according to its rules. He cannot be otherwise. In that all the Muqris are the same. Then follows the voice and that is where the difference comes. Listeners make a choice. It is not the Muqris who are greater, it is the choices that vary. All those who recite the Quraan should be respected because of their recitation and not for their voice. Respecting the recitation is respecting the Quraan."

In his chauffeur driven car he always liked to sit next to his driver whom he called "Akh Mas'ood" (Brother Mas'ood).

Sheikh AbdulBasit is a household name throughout the Muslim world. His recitals have swept over continents, land



and sea. Today, no Muslim home is complete without a tape recording or a CD recording of his recitals.

#### **FIRST DIRECTOR OF THE نقابة القراء 'UNION FOR THE QURRA'**

In the 1940's, an Agency for the Qurra was established. The late Sheikh Ali Mahmood was chosen as president. After his demise the late Sheikh Abdul-Fattah Sha'sha'ee was elected as president. After him Sheikh Taha Fashni was elected and after him was Sheikh 'Itrees. The 'Ahlul-Quraan' (people of the Quraan) thought about establishing a "NIQAABAH" (Union) which would see to the affairs of the Quraan and Huffaz in particular. The 'Niqaabah' was to replace the "RABITAH" (Agency). This was not an easy matter. Hindrances came from all sides. Certain Ulama agreed to this idea and certain others felt it was not necessary. The matter was left to the 'Ahlul-Quraan'. . . i.e. Al-Banna, Ismail, AbdulBasit, Abul-Aynayn and Tablaawi to strive and establish this Union and get it passed by all the 'Ulama.

They did not leave any stone unturned or any door unattended in this pursuit of theirs. . . and along the way one of the flowers from this beautiful garden fell off. . . i.e. the demise of Sheikh Mustafa Ismail in 1978. He left them to accomplish this task. Sheikh Al-Banna thought of taking this matter up to President Anwar Sadat. The rest of them agreed and they went to meet him. Allah thus used Anwar Sadat as a means to establish the "NIQABAT-UL-QURRA", which would see to all the affairs of the Qurra and Huffaaz.

It also attends to the needs of the families of those Qurra who pass away and leave behind a widow and children etc. Once the "Ahlul-Quraan" were permitted to establish this Union they were very happy and joyous. The only thing now was to choose a leader and director for this. Everyone agreed with Sheikh Mahmood Al-Banna when he explained in detail that the only person worthy for this post is his friend, Sheikh AbdulBasit Muhammad AbdusSamad. Thus Sheikh AbdulBasit was the first leader, director and Ameer

of the "NIQABATUL-QURRA' ". After him Sheikh Abul Aynayn was made the leader of the "Niqabah".

#### **AWARDS AND MEDALS AWARDED TO SHEIKH ABDULBASIT**

Sheikh AbdulBasit received the following medals and awards:

1. A medal of efficiency and qualifications from Morocco.
2. A medal of merit from Senegal.
3. Two medals from the Syrian minister, Sabri Al-'Asali in 1959.
4. A gold medal from Malaysia in 1956.
5. A medal of merit from Indonesia.
6. A gold medal from Pakistan.
7. A medal from the Labanese President, Sami As-Sulh.
8. Awards from Tunisia and Iraq.
9. An award from the Egyptian Broadcasting Corporation in 1984 when it celebrated its 50th anniversary.
10. A medal of the first grade awarded by president Husni Mubarak in 1987.
12. A medal of the first grade for Knowledge and Sciences awarded to his name in a gathering on the eve of 'Qadar' in 1990.

#### **ILLNESS AND DEMISE**

Sheikh AbdulBasit always complained about mild stomachaches for which he took medication as well. No one took it seriously, for he had endured this ailment for most of his life. Later in his life he became diabetic and in 1988 he developed an infection of the liver and was admitted to Dr. Ibrahim Badraan hospital in Giza, where he spent a week under observation, but his health sadly kept deteriorating. His doctors and sons advised him to travel to London for treatment. Accompanied by his son Tariq he undertook this journey. There was no improvement at all and after another week's stay there he told his son to make arrangements for their return to Egypt. It was as if he knew that his life was over and the time to meet Allah was very close. He's soul was prepared to meet its Creator, due to the abundance of



recitation of the Quraan. Upon arriving home he praised Allah and told his children that his time for leaving this world was near. For the next few days he got them to sit around him and advised them to be good towards each other. He expressed his wish that his eldest son perform his Janazah Salaah and that it be done at Masjid Mahmood in Al-Muhandiseen. He wanted the ceremony of mourning to be held at Masjid Hamidiyyah Shazhiliyyah in Al-Muhandiseen as well.

Sheikh AbdulBasit Muhammad AbdusSamad passed away in the late afternoon on Wednesday, the 30th of November in 1988. That was a very difficult day for Muslims in all four corners of the world. People from all races and backgrounds knew him, loved him, and loved his voice, his manner of recitation and his personality. His funeral was attended by all the ambassadors of all the countries, representing their country. This day will be remembered by all his fans and admirers throughout the world.

Sheikh AbdulBasit lived for 62 years.

Every year on this day, a commemoration is held in his honour at Masjid Hamidiyyah Shazhliyyah where many professional Qurra attend, reciting portions from the Quraan, paying their respects to this great man and his family, and praying for him.

Sheikh AbdulBasit had a voice from heaven, a charismatic charm and warm personality. He has inspired many all over the world to learn and study Islaam and its message. His achievements stand as testimony to his dedication and discipline. He was a man who sacrificed his life for the Quraan and his legendary style will never be forgotten.

Ahmad Al-Humam, an Egyptian writer, who was deeply effected by the passing away of this great Qari, said the following couplets from the recesses of his heart;

في رحاب الله يا خير قارئ عرفت بالخلق النبيل

بخشوع قلب و صفاء نفس تلوت وراء حفص بالترتيل

زرت بلاد العالم أجمع فقبولت بالحب والكرم والتبجيل

يوم نادينا و قلنا نقابة أجت بها فكنت الدليل

اقرأ و ارتق و رتل لك منزلة قالها محمد و أقرها جبريل

على ضفاف الكوثر تجد من سبقوك بالتجويد و الترتيل

هم جيلك فأنس بهم نعم الزميل لذلك الرعيل

طيب الله ثراهم حصرى و منشاوى و بنا و إسماعيل

#### TRANSLATION:

*Into the court of Allah, O the best of Qaries, you were recognized by excellent character. . .*

*With devotion of the heart and the purity of the soul, You recited following Hafs in pace and measure. . .*

*You visited the entire world and were received with love, honour and grandeur. . .*

*When we called and requested for leadership for the Union, you answered our call and became a leader. . .*



*"Recite, ascend and read with pace and measure," because for you is a place which Muhammad ﷺ has informed us of and Jibreel ؑ has guaranteed. . .*

*At the 'Kauthar' you will find others who have preceded you (reciting with) Tarteel and Tajweed. . .*

*They are your group, so find comfort with them, O the best of friend to those who have passed on.*

*May Allah make their abode a blessed one. (They were ;)*

*Husri, Minshaawi, Banna and Ismail.*

### **FAMOUS ABROAD . . . POPULAR AT HOME**

While Sheikh AbdulBasit was well respected and famous abroad, he was equally popular in Egypt. He was amongst the official state Qaris of the radio and television. He was amongst the top reciters sent by the Awqaaf to foreign countries. With it's population of millions of Muslims, Cairo itself was a busy venue for the Qurra, especially for a Qari like Sheikh AbdulBasit. In Egypt he used to travel to all the villages and cities like Alexandria, Port Said, Suez, Gardak, Aswan and Saeed. On Fridays he usually recited at Musjid Al-Imaam Ash-Shafee, although he was frequently seen at other Masaajid. The only time the honoured Sheikh was not able to recite at these Masaajid was obviously when he was abroad, and this happened more frequently as his fame increased.

Sheikh AbdulBasit was that famous renowned Egyptian Qari who was a vibrant flag bearer in the channels of recitation. There is no difference of opinion in the fact that his voice played a great role in spreading the Quraan. To this day, people who heard and loved his voice ask as to what was the hidden secret in his voice that made him stand out and be special in the hearts of all Muslims in the entire world from all those who recited the Quraan before him? Perhaps it was that he had his own style of reading and did not imitate anyone. By doing this he put himself in a special place on the map of the great Qurra' side by side with excellent readers like Sheikh Ali Mahmood, Muhammad Saifi, Muhammad Salamah, Muhammad Rif'at, Abdul Fattah Sha'sha'ee, AbulAynayn, Kamil Yusuf Bahtimi, Abdul Azeem

Zahir, Musatafa Ismail, and Muhammad Siddeeq Al-Minshawi. These are the great men who are admired, listened to, followed, and by whom people are guided to the greatest of worldly enjoyments . . . and that is the enjoyment of listening to the Quraan-e-Kareem!!!

A French journalist described Sheikh AbdulBasit as "The legendary voice" because his voice had an attraction and left people affected after he recited two nights consecutively in Paris. The non-Muslim French, who had taken part in the gatherings to listen to the Sheikh, applauded him after each recitation because they too, were affected by his gentle and pleasant voice. It is not difficult to write a biography on the life of Sheikh AbdulBasit because he has made a mark of himself in history by his voice and different pronunciation, and his fame spread in the entire world. Who is there amongst us that does not know Sheikh AbdulBasit? Who is there that has not heard his recitation?!

### **FAMILY OF SHEIKH ABDULBASIT**

Sheikh AbdulBasit loved a domestic life. He left behind a wife and off-spring that he had nurtured very well. They are now carrying his name forward. He covered them with the shade of the Quraan because they were a piece of his heart. He instilled in their hearts kindness, softness and good character. He trained them in a Quranic Madrasah. Their example is like a good tree which bears good fruit because their bases and foundation were strong.

Allah had granted Sheikh AbdulBasit eleven children. Seven sons and four daughters, all of whom have memorised the Quraan. He had arranged with a Sheikh to conduct classes for them at home. Even after their completion, the Sheikh would come and listen to their revision.

### **The sons are:**

1. Muhammad, who was named after Nabi ﷺ. He works as an accountant at the Faisal Bank.
2. Jamal, who was named after President Jamal Abdul Nasar. He works as an accountant in a company. These sons are twins and were born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1952.



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3. Khalid, who is also an accountant. He was born in 1956.  
 4. Tariq, who is an officer in the police department. He was born in 1958. He recites the Quraan in the style and manner of his late father. He is often invited to participate in gatherings in and out of Egypt.  
 5. 'Isaam, who is a specialist in an eye hospital in the U.A.E.  
 6. Hishaam, who is an accountant in 'Egypt Bank'. He was born in 1960. He too, recites the Quraan in his late father's style.  
 7. Yaasir, who was born in 1954 and owns an advertising company.

**The daughters are:**

8. Sa'aad who is married to her cousin, Umar bin AbdulHameed bin AbdusSamad.  
 9. Fa'izah, who is married to Ahmad Abdul Lateef, an engineer.  
 10. Azhaar, who is married to Bakri Ahmad.  
 11. Aanisah, who has studied economics and politics in Cairo University.

May Allah Have mercy on Sheikh AbdulBasit Muahmmad AbdusSamad, Aameen.

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH SHEIKH ABDULBASIT**

***What is your advice to young upcoming Qaris?***

I advice them not to imitate. They must strive to be natural, they must be original and create a method of their own.

***Is it necessary for a Qari to know the meanings of the Quraan?***

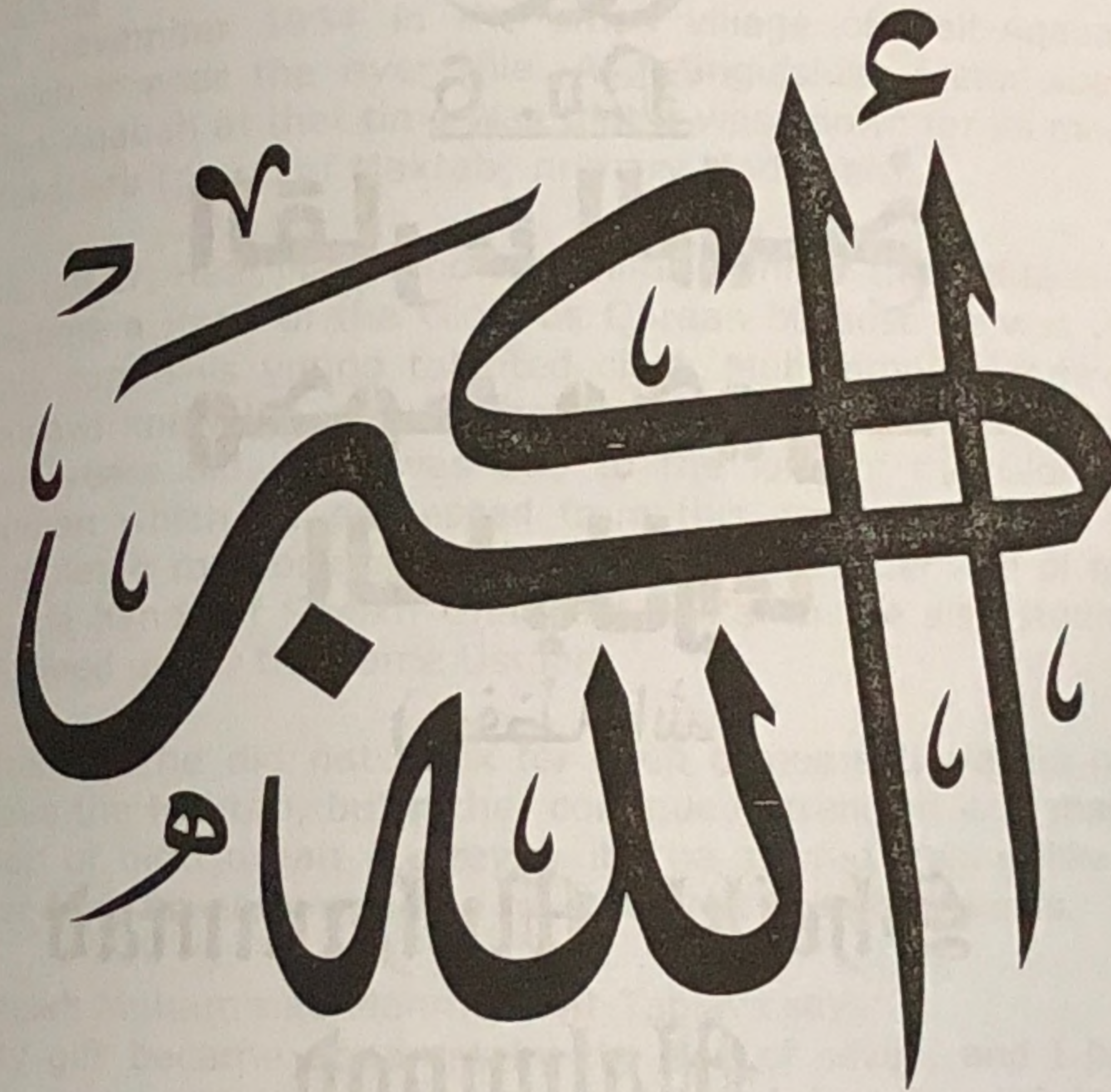
It is imperative for him to know the meanings of the Quraan so that he could bring out the meanings when he recites.

***How much of wealth do you have?***

I am ordered to keep my domestic matters in privacy.

***But if you convert your privacy into figures...?***

Then you will not be able to count it. **My treasure is the 'Kalamullah' (book of Allah).**





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اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ





No. 6

القارئ الشهير

محمد محمود

الطبرلاوي

(حفظه الله)

Sheikh Muhammad

Mahmood

al-Tablaawi

Hafizhahullah



## SHEIKH MUHAMMAD MAHMOOD AT- TABLAWI حفظه الله

### BIRTH

14 November 1934 in the small village of Meit-Aqabah, which is near the river Nile. A distinguishing factor about Meit-Aqabah at that time was that it was known for its many Makateeb (plural of Maktab; primary Madrasah).

His father, Haaj Mahmood took him to one of the Maktab to become a Hafiz of the Glorious Quraan because he was the only son. This young talented child, Muhammad Mahmood Tablawi knew his way to the Maktab whereas he was only four years old. This was due to the love of the Glorious Quraan which he possessed from this early age. Thus he completed memorizing the Quraan at the tender age of ten at the hands of Sheikh Ghaneem Al-Zaawi. He also studied Tajweed under the same Ustaad.

After this he did not relax for even a moment. He did not leave the Maktab, but rather continued attending it to make 'Dor' of his Quraan (i.e. revise it), he started shining like a star from an early age and he stood out from his friends.

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi says;

"My gift became apparent by the age of seven, and I had the option to take admission into al-Azhar Shareef (and study some secular subject) like the rest of my colleagues. Rather I opted for the difficult road which requires courage, strength, power, truthfulness, and which takes a long while to reach the goal. Those who are in a hurry often never reach their goal. That is why, since childhood, not once I tried to become famous and let myself be known. I first worked hard. I memorized the Glorious Quraan thoroughly, mastered Tajweed and worked on my voice. I was always aware of the fact that Allah Ta'aala has bestowed me with a great gift, i.e. the gift of the Glorious Quraan, and I knew that I had to look after it. I therefore, took it upon myself to



listen to, and revise what I heard from the great Qurra over the Radio and to learn the way of executing the proper rules of recitation. I began as a small Qari, and I used to recite in many gatherings, occasions and annual functions. This was in the beginning of my life as a Qari, and it was before the age of fifteen."

One night, at a certain gathering, Sheikh Ibrahim Mansoori heard him reciting and was impressed by his charming strong voice. He took him to Sheikh Mahmood Khaleel al-Husri, who heard him and was satisfied with his excellent recitation, correct Tajweed and Waqf (stopping).

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi used to recite the Glorious Quraan in many 'Saharat' (religious gatherings) independently as the *only* Qari, when he was merely twelve years of age. (*Commonly, young Qaris are not invited to recite in such gatherings, and if they are invited, they are there just as 'curtain raisers' and the main recitation is by one of the great Qaris.*) He used to be invited for 'Ihyaa-ul-ma'aatim' (i.e., to recite at the memorial gatherings) of big and influential people before he reached the age of 15! He then became famous in Giza, Cairo and Qalyubiyyah. He was the preferred and chosen Qari of many people because of his powerful recitation, stamina and ability which made it possible for him to recite continuously for over two hours non-stop. This was possible for him because of his intense desire to beautify his voice and also by attentively listening to the great and famous Qurra.

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi mentions;

"Since I became a Qari of the Glorious Quraan, one who would recite in gatherings and functions, I was very desirous of developing my own unique style. This was not achieved overnight, rather it took a lot of effort and sacrifice on my part. I did not allow the remuneration to become a hindrance between me and my recitations of the Glorious Quraan. I used to accept the offer to read in a gathering in the nights of Ramadhaan for 3 L.E. only. There were times

when I used to walk a distance of over five kilometres to participate in these gatherings. Later the time came when I used to go riding on a donkey. The sky does not pour down gold and silver, and the path to loftiness is not paved with roses and flowers, therefore, it is inevitable for one to slip and falter time and again in the initial stages, getting pricked by thorns and feeling the pain at times, and smiling at other times. This is the system of life. The one who laughs all the time will never be as successful as the one who cries and then laughs. The latter appreciates the value and sweetness of good fortune because he has tasted the bitterness of crying (hardships)."

#### **APPROVAL BY THE RADIO STATION**

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi is one such Qari who had undertaken many exams before being approved by the Radio station. He never lost hope. Whenever he was sent back and disapproved, he accepted this happily and he knew well that it is Allah Ta'aala's planning over everything else. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi went nine times to undertake the exams at the Station to be approved as one of its reciters, but permission was not granted by Allah Ta'aala.

Upon his tenth attempt he passed and qualified as a Qari to recite over the station with the consensus of the panel of examiners. This was in 1970. (*A point worth noting here is that these examinations are very strict and difficult. The criterion by which a person is judged is;*

1. memorization,
2. Tajweed,
3. Voice and,
4. Presentation. *If any one of the judges is not satisfied, the applicant is rejected and he only gets an opportunity to undertake the exams again after a year!*) Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi passed this test with an exemption of "ممتاز" i.e., Excellent! After this he received so much fame in just half an hour (when he recited over the air for the first time) which is generally only achieved in thirty



years! This was because he made 'Sabar' (exercised patience) for nine years. He became the talk of people from all walks of life and was given the title of "Zhaahirat-ul-Asar."

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi says; "A survey was done over radio, nationally and internationally. The survey concluded that Marhoom Sheikh AbdulBasis AbdurSamad was the one who took first position as the most famous Qari from the first generation, and I was chosen as the most famous qari amongst the next generation. I would like to make it clear that my relationship with the late Sheikh AbdulBasis was a good one. There were many occasions when I was invited to a gathering with Sheikh AbdulBasis, and his attitude towards me was always warm and welcoming. He used to give me preference and would ask me to recite before him. I used to decline and insist that he reads first. He would then finish off in adequate time so that I may have a fair chance to recite. All this was because Sheikh AbdulBasis knew that he had established himself in the hearts of people. . . and that Allah Ta'aala is the giver of sustenance, and no one can steal from another person's Rizq."

There are many incidents about Sheikh AbdulBasis and Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi, of which many are rumours and fabricated. One such incident is that there was a competition held in Saudi between Sheikh AbdulBasis and Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi to determine who had a longer breath and which one of the two could read more words in one breath etc. These are stories which are made up by people, and the intelligent one will not believe and accept this because the recitation of the Glorious Quraan is not gauged by breath and style and tunes, rather it is gauged by application of the correct rules, correct Tajweed, 'Waqf' and 'Ibtida', and correct pronunciation of the Huroof.

#### **A STRANGE INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF SHEIKH MUHAMMAD MAHMOOD AT-TABLAWI**

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi says;

"I once starred into the face of such an incident wherein I almost lost my life, but Allah Ta'aala protected me. It occurred when I was invited to participate in the 'Ma'tam' (memorial gathering) of some prominent person in one of the suburbs of Cairo. The marquee was filled to capacity. While I was waiting for my final and closing recitation, the waiter came to me and asked 'Will you have a cup of coffee, Sheikh Mahmood?' I said; "Yes, if it is not a problem." After a while he brought the coffee and placed it on the little table in front of me. I got busy with other things and forgot about the coffee. The man in charge of the microphones told me "Your coffee is getting cold, Sheikh Mahmood." I stretched my hand towards it and at that very moment a friend came and greeted me. So instead of taking the coffee, I shook his hand and began talking to him. I intended to drink the coffee, but I felt that something held my hand from picking up the cup. Suddenly the host came and requested me to recite. I left the coffee and went on to recite. The man in charge of the microphone system drank the coffee, and after a short while he had to be rushed by ambulance to the hospital in Qasr-ul 'Ain. Allah Ta'aala saved him and he recovered. This was how the unseen hand of Allah Ta'aala twice came to the aid. Firstly, when it prevented me from drinking coffee and the second time when it cured the man and he survived."

There are many other incidents that took place, sometimes people would phone and invite him to read in a Ma'tam in one of the far off provinces. When he reached there, he would find that no such address exists at all, and he would realize that it was a hoax. He was invited to Mansoorah, Port Said and Zaqazeeq on such hoax calls. Ever since, he takes precaution when he receives such calls and makes sure that it is a genuine invitation.



The same occurrence happened with Sheikh AbdulBasit also. He once said; *"A person phoned me and said, 'Tomorrow we have a Ma'tam here in Tanta, will you be able to make it, Sheikh AbdulBasit?' I told him, 'Yes, its fine. I have no other obligations.' He finalized everything with me and gave me a detailed address. When I went to Tanta, I found out that the address he gave me was that of a church! I laughed and said to myself 'My luck!'"*

### **SHEIKH MUHAMMAD MAHMOOD AT-TABLAWI'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi has visited many countries world wide to recite the Glorious Quraan. He travelled to more than 80 countries, either by special invitations or being sent by the Ministry of Awqaaf and al-Azhar Shareef. He has also participated in many international Quraanic competitions, where Qurra and Huffaz from all over the world read.

Amongst the invitations he received was an invitation from Mr. John Latsis of Greece to recite the Glorious Quraan before the Muslims in Greece for the first time. Similarly, he received an invitation from Italy via the Egyptian embassy there to recite the Glorious Quraan for the first time in the city of Rome in front of a huge Muslim crowd. Another invitation he received which he will never forget, was the invitation from the Jordanian palace to participate in the Ma'tam of the queen Zain-ush-Sharf, mother of King Husain. This ceremony was held at the Raghdan palace in Amman.

Amongst other countries he went to, was India. He says; "I went to India as part of an Egyptian delegation by the invitation of Sheikh Abul Hasan An-Nadwi R.A. The Ameer of our delegation was the late Dr. Zakariyyah Barri who was the minister of Awqaaf at that time. It so happened that we were delayed and reached the place of the seminar, which was in New Delhi, half an hour later than the appointed time. Very tactfully and cleverly, Dr. Barri said that the only

person who can walk in front of us when we walk in is Sheikh Tablawi, because he is the only one who is known and famous here, and the people have heard of him. They may forgive us on seeing his turban and 'Tarboosh' (the red headgear with the white turban tied around it). That is exactly what happened. As we entered, the M.C. announced "The Egyptian delegation is here, and leading them in is Sheikh Tablaawi. . . we will restart our session." This was a very difficult moment for me because there were personalities present here from all over the world. After the programme, a huge crowd of people gathered around me to greet me. On seeing this, the Minister asked them, "Do you people know Sheikh Tablaawi?" They said, "Yes, and we also know Sheikh AbdulBasit and many other great Egyptian Qurra!"

When we returned to Egypt after this trip, the minister of Awqaaf, Dr. Zakariyya handed over many posts to me, such as 'Sheikh 'Umoomil-Maqariul-Misriyyah' (Sheikh for all the affairs pertaining to the Quraan and the Qurra), member of the high commission for Islamic Affairs, member of the Lajnat-ul-Qurra (Agency for the Qurra), a religious consultant in the Ministry of Awqaaf. I was given this honour which many others coveted."

### **AL-MUS'HAFUL MURATTAL...**

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi says; "All praise is due to Allah Ta'aala. He has honoured me by granting me the opportunity to record the complete Quraan twice . . . once in the Mujawwad (Tarteel) mode and once in the Murattal (Hadar) mode." His recording of the Mus'haful Murattal (Hadar recitation) is common in all the Arab countries. These recordings are in addition to the wide collection of his other recordings and those recordings which were done on his trips abroad, in major Masaajid around the Arab world. The recordings of all these recitations are available at "Ibrahim & Company" the owner of which is Ibrahim, son of Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi. It



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Amongst the invitations he received was an invitation from Mr. John Latsis of Greece to recite the Glorious Quraan before the Muslims in Greece for the first time. Similarly, he received an invitation from Itaiy via the Egyptian embassy there to recite the Glorious Quraan for the first time in the city of Rome in front of a huge Muslim crowd. Another invitation he received which he will never forget, was the invitation from the Jordanian palace to participate in the Ma'tam of the queen Zain-ush-Sharf, mother of King Husain. This ceremony was held at the Raghdaan palace in Amman.

Amongst other countries he went to, was India. He says; *"I went to India as part of an Egyptian delegation by the invitation of Sheikh Abul Hasan An-Nadwi R.A. The Ameer of our delegation was the late Dr. Zakariyyah Barri who was the minister of Awqaaf at that time. It so happened that we were delayed and reached the place of the seminar, which was in New Delhi, half an hour later than the appointed time. Very tactfully and cleverly, Dr. Barri said that the only*

*person who can walk in front of us when we walk in is Sheikh Tablawi, because he is the only one who is known and famous here, and the people have heard of him. They may forgive us on seeing his turban and 'Tarboosh' (the red headgear with the white turban tied around it). That is exactly what happened. As we entered, the M.C. announced "The Egyptian delegation is here, and leading them in is Sheikh Tablaawi. . . we will restart our session." This was a very difficult moment for me because there were personalities present here from all over the world. After the programme, a huge crowd of people gathered around me to greet me. On seeing this, the Minister asked them, "Do you people know Sheikh Tablaawi?" They said, "Yes, and we also know Sheikh AbdulBasit and many other great Egyptian Qurra!*

When we returned to Egypt after this trip, the minister of Awqaaf, Dr. Zakariyya handed over many posts to me, such as *'Sheikh 'Umoomil-Maqariul-Misriyyah'* (Sheikh for all the affairs pertaining to the Quraan and the Qurra), member of the high commission for Islamic Affairs, member of the Lajnat-ul-Qurra (Agency for the Qurra), a religious consultant in the Ministry of Awqaaf. I was given this honour which many others coveted."

#### **AL-MUS'HAFUL MURATTAL...**

Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi says; *"All praise is due to Allah Ta'aala. He has honoured me by granting me the opportunity to record the complete Quraan twice . . . once in the Mujawwad (Tarteel) mode and once in the Murattal (Hadar) mode." His recording of the Mus'haful Murattal (Hadar recitation) is common in all the Arab countries. These recordings are in addition to the wide collection of his other recordings and those recordings which were done on his trips abroad, in major Masaajid around the Arab world. The recordings of all these recitations are available at "Ibrahim & Company" the owner of which is Ibrahim, son of Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi. It*



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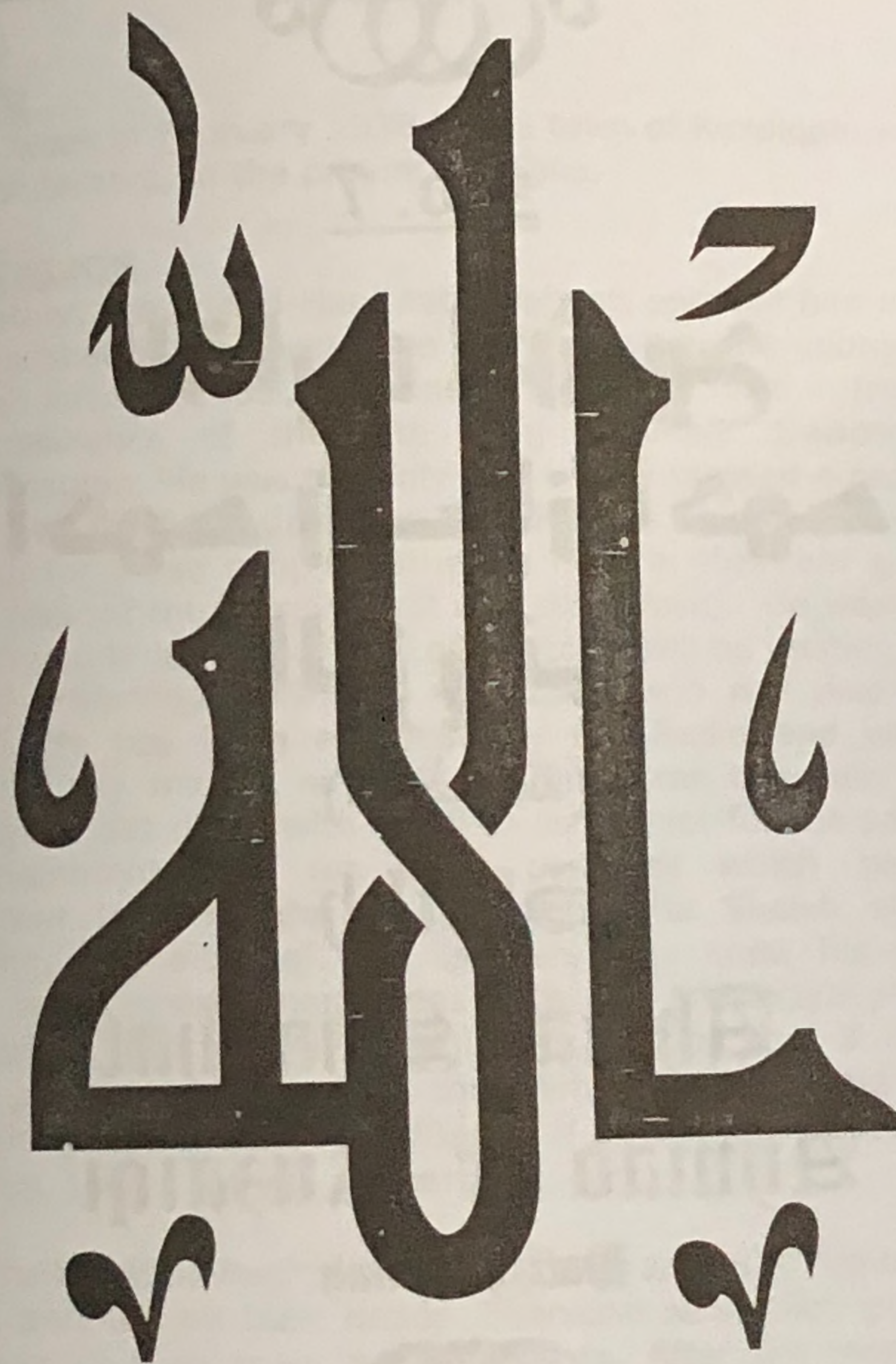
is situated at No. 7 Sheikh Tablaawi Street, Meit-Aqabah behind Nada at-Tarsanah.

**AWARDS RECEIVED BY SHEIKH MUHAMMAD MAHMOOD AT-TABLAWI**

He received a certificate of honour from Lebanon in a gathering on Lailatul Qadar (night of Power) for his sacrifices in serving the Glorious Quraan. Although he was extremely happy with this award, he says; "I am very sad because I have been honoured out of my country, and not in my country which is the panicle of knowledge and the center of attraction for Ulama."

Many people are of the opinion that Sheikh Tablaawi is a person who is unique in his ways, habits and character, as well as in his method of reciting. "صاحب مدرسة مستقلة"

He was appointed to recite in the Al-Azhar Musjid after the demise of Sheikh Mustafa Ismail in 1977, and is still on this post. (i.e. when this book was published in 2005...)





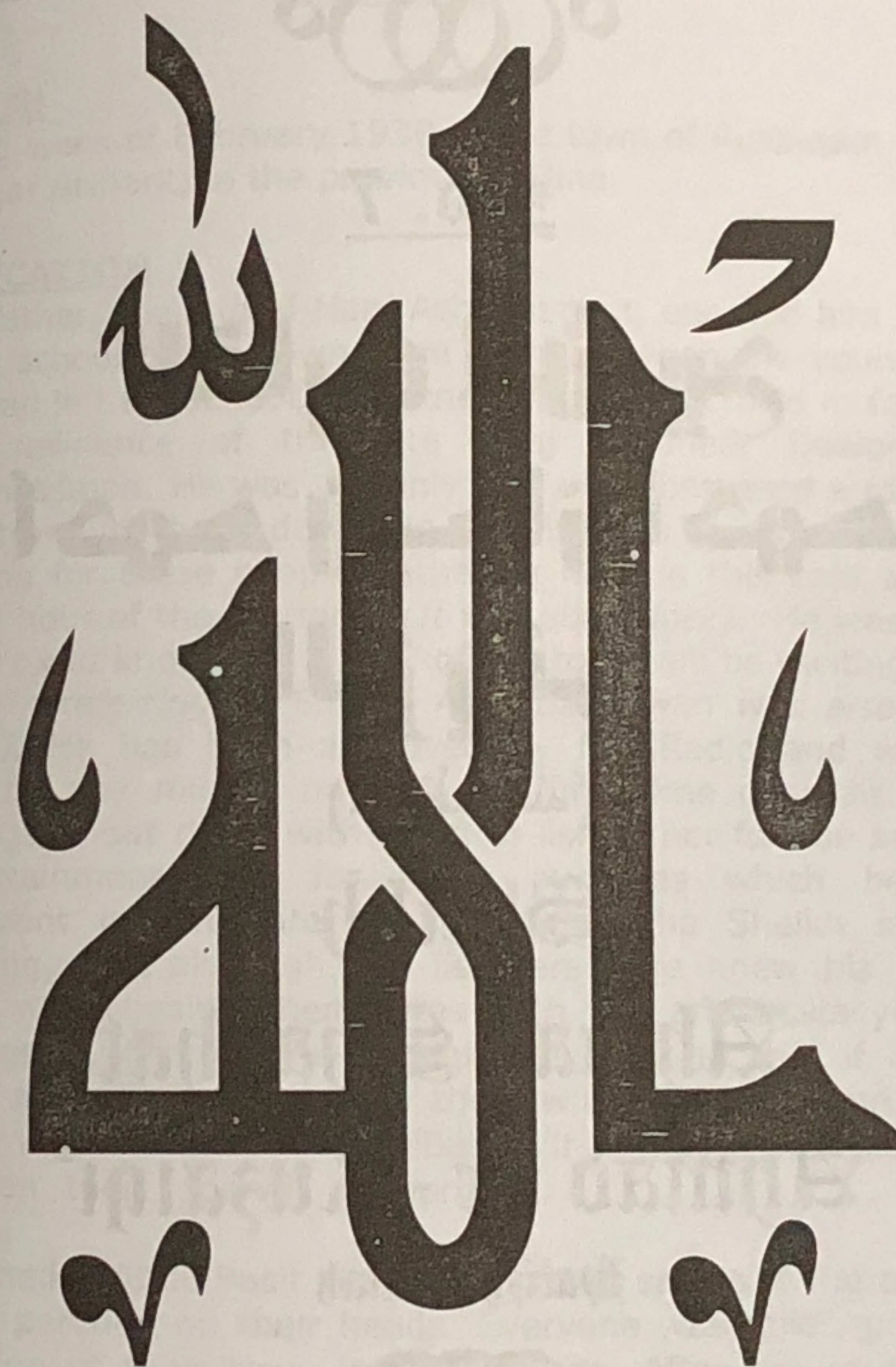
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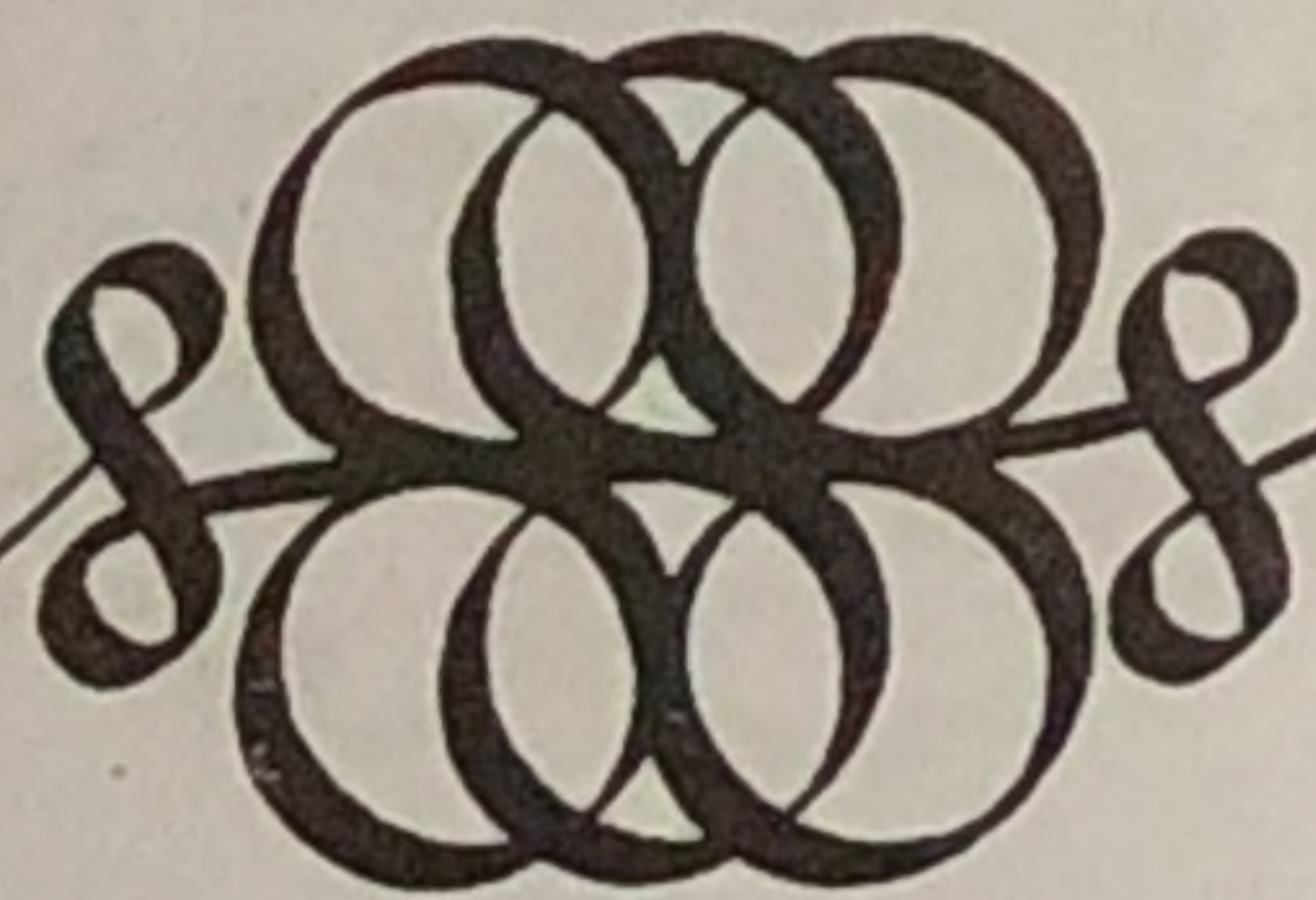




No. 7

القارئ الشيخ  
أحمد شاهات أحمد  
الرزايقي  
(حفظه الله)

Sheikh  
Ahmad Shahhat  
Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi  
Hafizhahullah



## SHEIKH AHMAD SHAHAAT AHMAD AR- RUZAIQI حفظه الله

### BIRTH

Third week of February 1938 in the town of Ruzaiqaat which is near Armant, in the province of Qina.

### EDUCATION

His father, the late al-Haaj Ash-Shahaat, enrolled him in the local school of the town. One morning when the youngster, Ahmad left for school, he witnessed a huge crowd in front of the residence of the late Haaj al-Ameer Dawood, a businessman. He was the only one who possessed a radio in the town in those days. He enquired as to what was the reason for these people gathering here in this cold at this early hour of the morning. (*It was six o'clock*). He was told: "Don't you know that a 'son' of our town will be reciting over radio? (referring to Sheikh AbdulBasit who was also from Qina). He has been approved by the Radio and will be reciting any minute now for the first time over air." The youngster sat down with them to listen, not for the sake of entertainment, but for other purposes which became apparent in him later in life. Soon the Sheikh started reciting, and although the listeners here knew his voice, they were beside themselves with joy and ecstasy! This youngster, (Ahmad Ar-Ruzaiqi) sat thinking that if this is how a Qari is honoured, then what prevents me from becoming like Sheikh AbdulBasit? If he has memorized the Quraan, then I too will memorize it.

As Sheikh AbdulBasit read, the crowd sat as if there were birds perched on their heads. Everyone was quiet, praising the son of their town in their hearts. After the recitation, Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi walked away from there, and the object of his life had changed completely, to such an extent that from that point in time he headed towards the Maktab instead of the school. Upon reaching the Maktab, he greeted



the Ustaad and sought permission to sit in his lesson. This is how he began memorizing the Glorious Quraan.

He stayed absent from school for about a week without anyone at home knowing about it. Thereafter, the school sent a letter to his father informing him of his son's absenteeism. His father was surprised, because the son left home every morning to go to school.

When Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi returned home that day, his father asked him "Where were you? Were you at school or not?" Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi replied to his father in such a way which no one would imagine that a child could answer like that. He told his father "Why don't you ask me why was I absent until today?" "Because I always thought that you were at school, but today I received this note informing me of your absenteeism." replied his father. Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi then related to his father what had transpired . . . upon which his father hugged and kissed him. He then asked him as to what he had learnt at the Maktab, and Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi read for him what he had by-heart till then. The father became happy and made a lot of Dua for him.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi used to imitate the other great Qurra whom he used to hear over air and those who recited in different venues in 'صعيد' - Upper Egypt. When he completed the memorization of the Glorious Quraan by the age of ten at the hands of Sheikh Mahmood Ibrahim, his father purchased a radio as a gift for him so that he may listen to the Qurra of the past. Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi used to take a glass object which was round and place it by his mouth as a microphone and recite in it. He even had a self-made image of the physical appearance of each Qari in his mind. The thing to note here is that he regarded them to be the ultimate . . . i.e., he held them in high esteem like angels because of his intense love for them.

He says; "I had this picture of Sheikh AbulAynayn in my mind, but when I saw him, I was very surprised, because I

always thought that these people are not like us, they must be another creation! When I met Sheikh AbulAynayn, I told him; "The reality is other than what I thought. I thought that you had the beauty of Yusuf عليه السلام, and we both laughed at this. Today the time has come when, by the grace of Allah Ta'aala I am the one in charge of the 'Niqabatul-Qurra' (Agency of the Qurra) under the guidance of the revered and respected director of the Agency, Sheikh AbulAynayn Sha'eesha"

After having studied in the local Maktab at the hands of Sheikh Mahmood Ibrahim who taught him the Quraan by heart as well as many other branches of knowledge, Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi enrolled in the Institute of Qiraa'at in Asfoon-al-Matan'ah, which is near his village of Ruzaiqaat. Here he studied Tajweed, Qiraa'at al-Sab'ah and 'Uloomul-Quraan under the guidance of Sheikh Muhammad Saleem.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi mentions;

"I thought that if I tread on the path of the Glorious Quraan, I will become a Qari from amongst the Qurra. Therefore, I handed myself over to the Quraan and served it like how a slave would serve his master."

Sheikh Muhammad Saleem was a famous 'Alim of Egypt. He was the one who had also taught Sheikh AbdulBasit. Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi did not hesitate to go and study by him because everyone held him in high esteem, especially after Sheikh AbdulBasit qualified under him.

After Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi's fame reached all the surrounding areas, he began receiving invitations to enliven the nights of Ramadhaan, to recite in the Ma'aatim and religious gatherings. He soon won the love of the people in صعيد - Upper Egypt.

#### TO CAIRO

In 1966 he went to Cairo with Sheikh Ahmad Ridwaan, who was a great Alim. Here he became very famous. People



began inviting him to various gatherings to recite. He was always invited to the functions which were organized by top businessmen . . . gatherings such as the Maulid-un-Nabee, Maulid of Sayyidah Zainab and that of Sayyidina Hussain. Many times there used to be some great Qurra reciting at one function like Sheikh Muhammad Rif'at, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Sha'sha'ee, Sheikh Minshaawi, Sheikh Sha'eesha' and Sheikh AbdulBasit etc. In these instances it was usually difficult for a new Qari to get his place amongst these Qurra. However, some people's luck is different. Allah Ta'aala, through His bounty made it possible for Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi to include his name amongst the great Qurra. Secondly, it was the favour of Marhoom Sheikh AbdulBasit, who always encouraged Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi to recite with these Great Qurra in the city of Cairo.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi says;

"Once I was with Sheikh Ahmad Ridwaan sitting in a gathering of Ulama when Sheikh Ahmad asked me to recite. I read surah Ale-Imraan till I came to the verse; *إنك لا تحلف الميعاد* whereupon I completed the recitation. Amongst those present were Sheikh Abul 'Uyoon. He looked at me and said; "O my son, you have portrayed to us your powerful way of reading but you stopped at the verse *إنك لا تحلف الميعاد* and did not complete the next verses till *والله عنده حسن الثواب*. This is how he taught me to recite with meaning and to stop at the end of the subject matter. My sitting with these Ulama used to benefit me greatly."

He further stated "Sheikh AbdulBasit was a person I kept close to and to whom I turned to in all my matters."

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi used to frequently visit Cairo before he moved there permanently with his family. The very first thing he used to do on arrival was to always visit the family of Rasululallah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, especially the tombs of Sayyidina Husain and Sayyidah

Zainab R.A. Thereafter he used to go to Sheikh AbdulBasit to learn something concerning the Glorious Quraan.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi says;

"Once when I came to Cairo, then as usual, I went to benefit Sheikh AbdulBasit. He told me, *خلاص! لن تعود إلى الصعيد* (Right! You cannot return to Saeed - Upper Egypt.) I asked him "Why is that so, O respected Sheikh?" He said, "Because you will recite in the evening gatherings with me and you will become famous with me until you get approved by the Radio, Insha-Allah." He then used to take me with him wherever he went, and I recited with him in all the provinces until I became very famous. The great and influential people began listening to my recitation attentively.

I remember the times when I read in front of Sa'ad ad-Deen Shareef, Hasan Abbas Zaki, Fareed Basha Za'look and Mr. Nabeel Fathul Baab. They all really liked my reading and told me to become a Qari of the Radio. Fareed Basha wrote a letter to his friend Mahmood Hasan Ismail, who was in charge of the religious and Deeni department at the Radio station at that time. Instead of going with this letter to the Radio station, I went away to Saeed. I kept this letter safely. In 1967, I went to Cairo and went to the radio station to meet Mr. Mahmood Hasan. I told him that I had come to him with a letter from a close friend of his, one who had conferred numerous favours upon him. He asked, "Who, Fareed Basha?" I said, "Yes." He read the letter, and then told me that the Agency could not hold their qualifying tests for new Qaris until the tension from the enemies was over. I said that I pray to Allah Ta'aala that the enmity is over quickly and that Allah Ta'aala assists Egypt. If Allah Ta'aala wills then I will return to the Radio Station for the examination. I then returned to my home town and continued reciting the Glorious Quraan in gatherings and occasions in the neighboring provinces and some coastal areas."



### **SHEIKH RUZAIQI'S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT AND HIS REPLY**

Once while he was sitting under a tree on the banks of the Nile, he thought of writing a letter to the late president Anwar Sadat. He wrote as follows;

Respected brother, President Muhammad Anwar Sadat,  
As Salamu Alaikum. . .

I am writing this letter to you not because you are the President or the Ruler, but because you are my brother. I am a Qari of the Glorious Quraan and I fear Allah Ta'aala in this regard. I have been with the Quraan since childhood, to such an extent that I have become a servant of the Glorious Quraan. I have been to those in charge of the radio station, but they told me that a test could not be held until the tension is over between us and our enemy. Here we have gained victory over our enemy in the war last October, which was led by you. I humbly request you to ask the Radio officials to set up a time for my test so that I may be one of its reciters."

After a few days I received a reply from the President, in which he wrote,

"Respected brother, Qari Sheikh Ahmad Ruzaiqi,  
As Salamu Alaikum. . .

Your touching letter has reached us, which was filled with words of love and kindness. We have contacted the Radio Station, and found that your request is there. The Radio will inform you of when you are to go for the test. I pray to Allah Ta'aala to grant you the ability to do good. I hope you will be successful . . . I am waiting to hear you recite!  
Muhammad Anwar Sadat.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi's happiness could not be described. He was overwhelmed at the response from the President. After receiving the letter he boarded the first train to Cairo and headed towards the Radio Station. The authorities stipulated a date for his examination. After he

undertook this exam, he was given a date for another exam after six months. When he undertook the exam for the second time, he passed with excellence, and all the examiners praised his reading.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi holds a very esteemed and high position in Egypt. He is the director of the Agency of the Qurra through which he is striving and working very hard to preserve the rights of the Quraan and the Ahlul-Quraan. He once mentioned that the Radio has rights over the Qari. The radio only broadcasts that which the listeners want to hear. Therefore, it is necessary for a Qari to maintain a good relationship with the Radio as far as the recitation of the Glorious Quraan is concerned. He must recite it as it was revealed by Allah Ta'aala, and as he learnt it from our Ulama. He must recite every letter by giving it its due right and pronouncing it correctly. He must not sing when reading the Quraan in such a way that the rules of Tilawaah are distorted.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi is amongst those few Qurra who recite the Aayaat of the Glorious Quraan very articulately. He recites with the best of Tajweed. He gives the Quraan its due and right as far as its reverence and honour is concerned. One of the factors that distinguish this Qari from others is that when he recites, he recites with ease, so much so that even the person sitting close to him does not pick up any exertion or strain from him in his recitation.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi is also a poet and likes to write poetry. In fact he is known as an 'اديب' and a 'شاعر'.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi misses the generation of the Qurra who have passed on. Whenever he discusses them, he begins tearing. When asked as to why he cries, he said "I feel like a yateem (orphan) after the demise of Sheikh Husri, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Al-Banna and Sheikh AbdulBasis, and in actual fact I am a Yateem. So do not ask me why I tear when I speak of them. They recited the Glorious Quraan for the sake of the Quraan. Nowadays it is



not the same. You will see Qurra competing with one another. Why should I not cry when there is a time which I will never forget? Once I read at a gathering with Marhoom Sheikh Husri. After the programme, he remained seated on one side until he saw me. He called me over and told me that I was waiting for you so that I could take you in my car. I said to him "O respected Sheikh, do not worry, I will take a taxi and go home." He said "Why do you want to pay for a taxi when you have a car of your own" I asked "Where is my car?" He replied "My car is your car, Sheikh Ahmad." So I went with him and he left me right at the doorstep of my building. If he could help it he would have driven into the building till the door of my apartment"

#### **MEMORIES OF SHEIKH RUZAIQI WITH SHEIKH ABDULBASIT**

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi mentions;

"I have many memories with Sheikh AbdulBasit R.A. I travelled with him to many countries of the world. He always portrayed the picture that he was travelling with me, whereas I used to be travelling with him- this was due to his noble character. He was a very civilized and humble man, with good character. I travelled with him to South Africa where there was a problem of apartheid. It was difficult to go and stay there at that time. When we reached Johannesburg, we found a huge crowd of people to welcome us, amongst who were many people from the media. I told Sheikh AbdulBasit not to worry.

He said الحافظ هو الله (the protector is Allah). Then we sat down in the V.I.P. lounge at the terminal. A female journalist came to us and Sheikh AbdulBasit told her, "Speak to my friend here, Sheikh Ruzaiqi. I am under him." She then asked me many questions. I told her "We are here on an important religious mission, and that is to recite the Glorious Quraan." She then asked me if I noticed the apartheid here. I told her that we had come to recite the Glorious Quraan and not to investigate on the apartheid here. Then a male journalist asked us if we had any security measures taken before we

came here. I told him "We have taken no such steps because we have come to spend a few days of leisure amongst our friends despite the difference of language and colour." This interview was being broadcast live over television. As we left the airport, people thronged around us and assured us that there is nothing to worry about, and that we will be safe.

In Nigeria, we were the guests of a very rich and wealthy man. He hosted us in a hotel and told us "Here is the bell, if you need anything, you should ring the bell and the attendant will see to you." When we felt thirsty, I rang the bell and a very tall man-whose height was about two and a half metres-came. He did not understand a word of Arabic or English. I explained to him through sign language that we were thirsty. He presented a menu. . . . Sheikh AbdulBasit told me to send him away. I laughed and asked him how was I to turn him away? Must I read Quraan to him to make him understand? We both laughed at this . . . and after a while our food was brought to us."

#### **DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NIQAABAT-UL-QURRA**

After the demise of Sheikh AbdulBasit AbdusSamad, the Qurra of Misr agreed upon the respected Sheikh AbulAynayn Sha'eesha' as the new director of the Agency for the Qurra, due to his deep history with the Quraan. The Agency was not just an agency, but rather there were many other matters included in running it, which needed a lot of sacrifice and striving, Thus Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi was elected as the next director for the Niqaabah! He had many unique qualities which he brought with him from Sa'eed (Upper Egypt). Allah Ta'aala aided him because he always sat in the company of Ulama, as well as the fact that he was the closest to Sheikh AbdulBasit.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi also possesses 'فصاحة' (eloquence), 'بلاغة' (profound speech), bravery and courage. He was the one who was really entitled for this position. On many



occasions Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi stood for rights of the Qurra. Many times he solved the problems facing the Qurra.

Once during the month of Ramadhaan, he did not travel to a certain country merely because another Qari wanted to go to that country. On another occasion he went to a country as the head of the group of Qurra who were travelling to that country, because one of the other Qaris did not wish to travel at that time. In this way he undergoes sacrifices and foregoes his rights to please others. This only proves that he possesses those qualities of patience and endurance, which others do not have. He always irons out the problems which the Qurra have amongst them. If any two Qurra have a difference on any given situation, he finds a suitable solution which would please both parties. His habit is that he always gives the Glorious Quraan its right before giving anyone their rights. He also stresses that the **Ahlul-Quraan** must have honour, dignity and the position which the Glorious Quraan demands from them.

#### **SHEIKH AHMAD RUZAIQI'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES.**

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi did not leave out any Arab or, Islamic country, or any other such place where there are Muslims, but that he goes there to benefit the population with the gift of the Glorious Quraan which Allah Ta'aala has bestowed upon him. The reason behind him being invited so frequently to other countries either in Ramadhaan or out of Ramadhaan to recite the Glorious Quraan, is because he is Allah conscious when reciting, he has the fear of Allah, and recites the Glorious Quraan as it ought to be recited. His aim is always to please Allah Ta'aala before pleasing the creation.

Amongst the countries to which Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi travelled was South Africa, when he visited with Marhoom Sheikh AbdulBasit in 1981. Then, in January 2001, he visited the country again with Sheikh AbdulBasit's son, Qari Tariq Bin AbdulBasit

#### **INCIDENTS WHICH SHEIKH AHMAD RUZAIQI WILL NEVER FORGET**

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi's life is filled with many incidents which he experienced with the Glorious Quraan for over forty years. Especially incidents with high ranking 'Ulama, and Fuqahaa.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi says;

"When I was being examined by the 'Lajnat-ul-Qurra' to become a Qari of the Radio, Sheikh Muhammad Ghazaali, who was a member of the Radio Station asked me to recite Surah at-Taghaabun in the Mujawwad mode (which we term as Tarteel). I told his eminence that I wish to read it in the Tarteel mode (which we call Hadr), if he does not mind.

The respected Sheikh insisted that I recite it Mujawwadan, and I was also just as persistent. His companion Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Maadhi told him, "Let Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi do as he pleases and that will be good enough for him." Only then did he change his mind and told me "Read it in the Tarteel (Hadar) mode, O Sheikh Ahmad." I then recited it. After my recitation, Sheikh M. Ghazaali was very pleased with my pronunciation, he thanked and praised me on my good control over the pronunciation. Days and years passed thereafter, and I became a famous Qari over the radio internationally. In 1985, I received an invitation from Qatar to enliven the nights of Ramadhaan there. I was to travel with Sheikh M. Ghazaali who was to render lectures. On the eve of Badar, (i.e., the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Ramadhaan-on which the battle of Badar was fought) I was to begin the proceedings of the night by a recital from the Glorious Quraan, and Sheikh M. Ghazaali was going to render a lecture on what I read. He asked me to recite from Surah Aale Imraam. . .

"لقد نصركم الله بدير وأنتم أذلّة"

I told him that I will recite from Surah at-Taghaabun. At this he gave a smile. He was a person of high status and superior character, so he said "Read two verses from Aale Imran so that I may speak on it due to it being appropriate



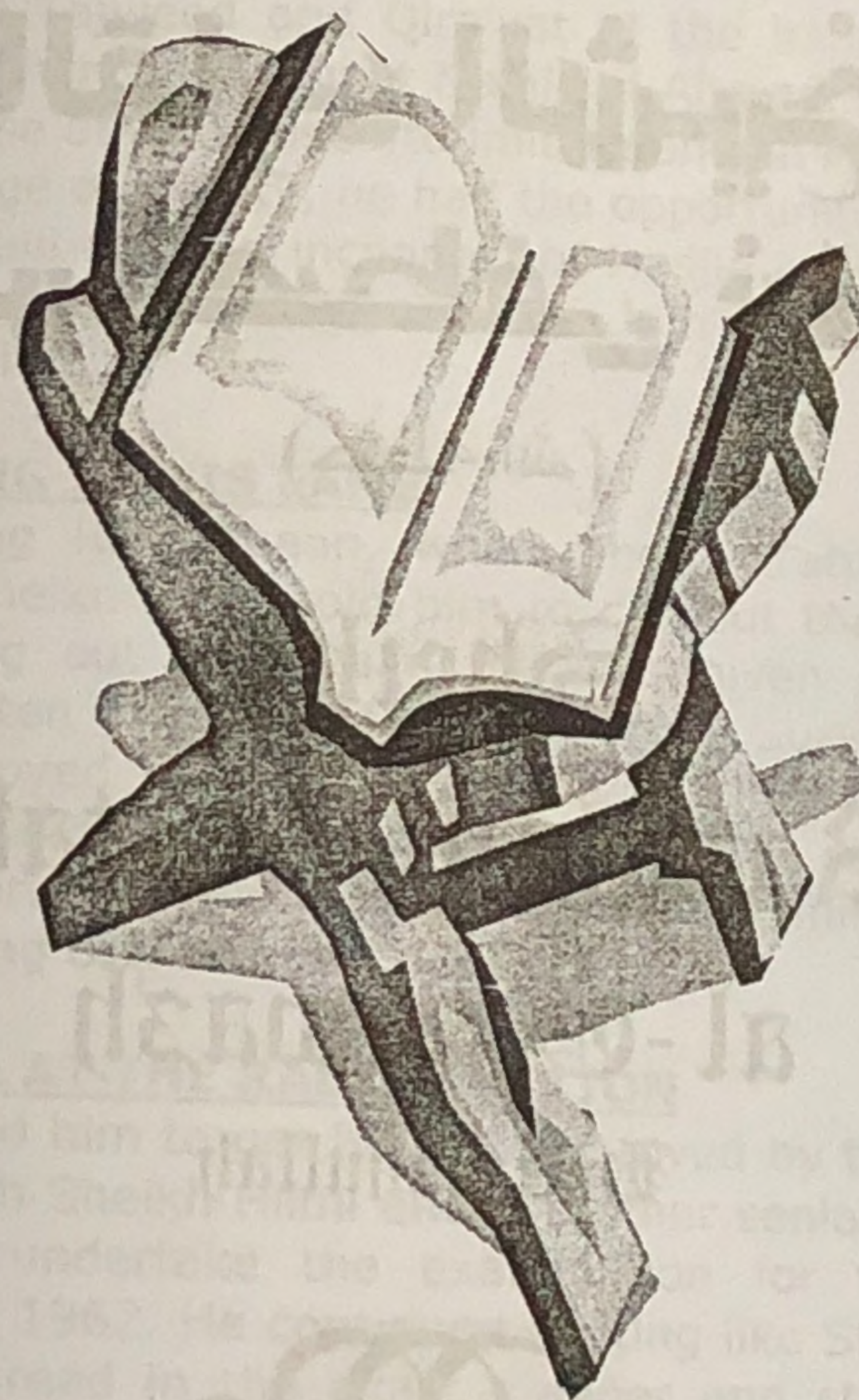
to the occasion, then you may recite Surah Taghaabon. It was not my intention to recite from Surah Taghaabun, I only wanted to remind him of what happened at the occasion of my examination at the 'Lajnah.'"

Another incident was at one of the 'Maulid-un-Nabi' gatherings which was attended by president Husni Mubarak to award the Ulama and Huffaz. Amongst those who were to receive awards was a little boy who had memorized the Glorious Quraan at the age of five. After the ceremony the youngster did not meet the president and walked away. The president went behind him and caught up with him. He said "You walked away without making Salaam to me". He then kissed him and asked him his age and his father's particulars. Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi says; "This incident shook me because it shows the importance which the President gave to this child."

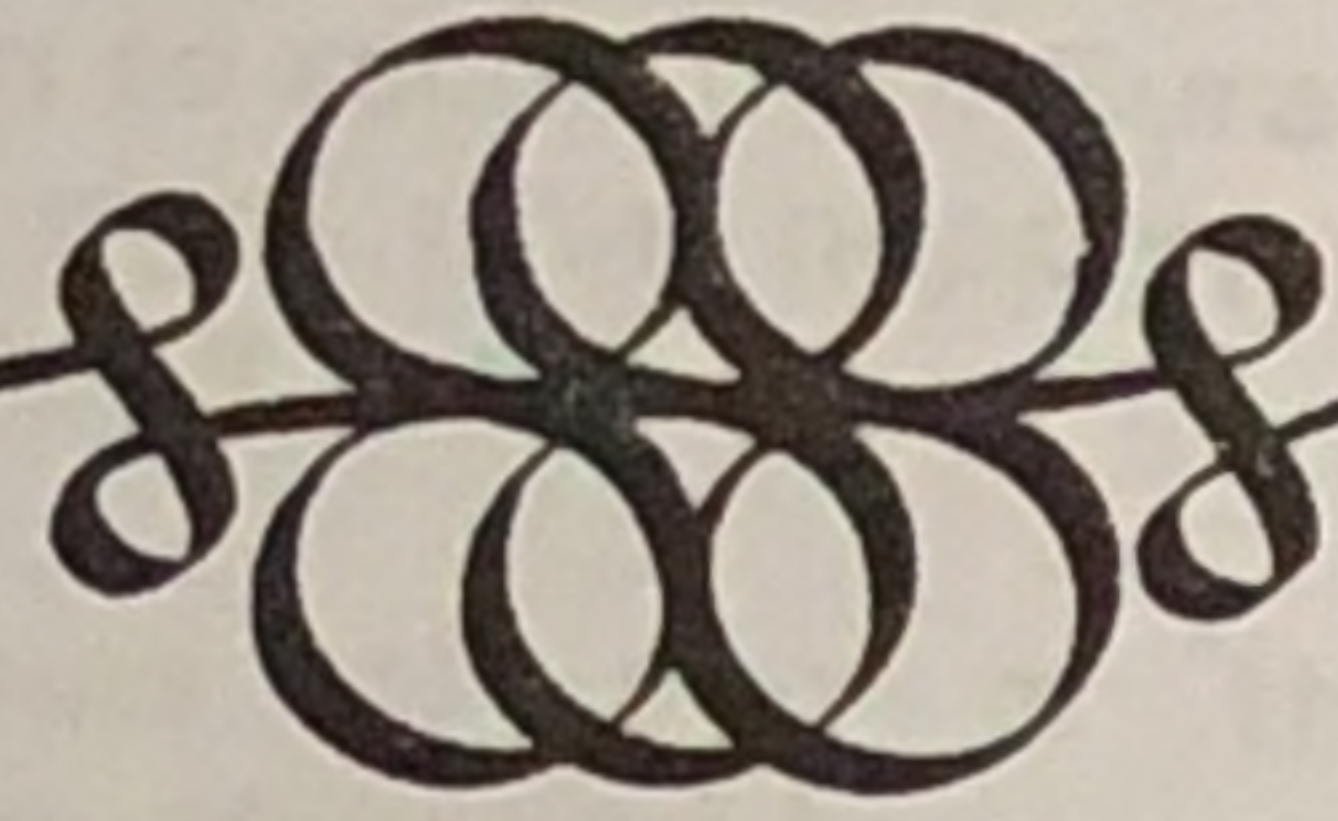
#### **AWARDS RECEIVED BY SHEIKH AHMAD AR-RUZAIQI**

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi received the 'Republican Award' of the first grade for his services rendered to the Glorious Quraan. He also received many medals and certificates, but the most valuable award is, as he says **"The love of the people"** because when Allah Ta'aala loves someone, he puts that person's love in the hearts of the people.

Sheikh Ahmad ar-Ruzaiqi was appointed as the Qari of Masjid Ayesha after being approved by the radio. Later he was moved to Masjid Sayyidah Nafeesah after the demise of Sheikh Mahmood Abdul Hakam.







No. 8

القارئ الرشيد  
راغب مصطفى غلوش  
(حفظه الله)

Sheikh  
Raaghib Mustafa  
al-Ghalwazh  
Hafizhahullah



## SHEIKH RAAGHIB MUSTAFA AL-GHALWASH

حفظه الله

### BIRTH

5 July 1938, in the "Burma" village, in the city of Tanta'.

He completed the Hifz of the Quraan at the age of nine and learnt it with Tajweec' by Sheikh Abdul Ghani As-Sharqaawi. He studied Tajweed and Qira'aat at the hands of the late Sheikh Ibrahim al-Tablihi at Masjid al-Ahmadi in Tanta.

During these days he used to imitate Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il. After the age of twenty, he had the opportunity to meet with the Mutawalli (person incharge) of Masjid al-Husain, Sheikh Hilmi. He recited a few verses to him which pleased and astounded him.

### BEGINNING OF HIS FAME

Once during Ramadhaan, when Sheikh Taha Fashni was delayed, Sheikh Hilmi told him to call out the Asar Azaan. After calling out the Azaan, he was given permission to recite for ten minutes. He read from Surah Al-Haqqah. People enjoyed his Qiraat so much that they kept on applauding and urging him to recite until he recited for over half an hour. This was a great honour for him. It was also the beginning of his fame.

### APPROVAL AT THE RADIO STATION

People urged him to get himself approved by the station, so he went with Sheikh Hilmi and two other senior persons and applied to undertake the examination for this. He was approved in 1962. He continued reciting like Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il. He read in the exact manner and style of Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, to such an extent that people used to be confused when they heard him over air. When he met Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, the great Sheikh told him "I am very proud of you, your excellent pronunciation and your



beautiful voice, you will be a shining star amongst the Qurra and you will hold a very honoured position."

#### **SHEIKH RAAGHIB AL-GHALAWSH'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

His first visit out of Egypt was to Libya, thereafter he travelled to Syria, Kuwait, U.A.E., Saudi and then to the rest of the Arab world. Later he also travelled to London, France, America, Brazil, and Canada where he recited in front of huge gatherings in the blessed months of Ramadhān. Many people accepted Islam on his hands when he visited the United Kingdom with Sheikh Nasr-ud-Deen Tubaar in the early 1970's. He visited Pakistan in 1995.

He has also recorded a complete set of the Glorious Quraan in the 'Murattal' (Hadar) mode of recitation.

#### **INCIDENTS IN HIS LIFE**

Two incidents which Sheikh Raaghib will never forget are;

- (i) When he once went to record a recitation for the Radio Station and met Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi at the studio. Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi gave him preference over himself and allowed him to recite first although he (Sheikh Muhammad) was given the earlier appointment and Sheikh Raghib was to record after him, and
- (ii) The occasion when he recited with Sheikh AbdulBasit in an 'Azaa'.



اقراء



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- (ii) The occasion when he recited with Sheikh AbdulBasit in an 'Azaa'.



اقراء





No. 9

القارئ الرشيد  
محمود صديق  
المنشawi  
(حفظه الله)

Sheikh  
Mahmood Siddeeq  
al-Minshaawi  
Hafizhahullah



## SHEIKH MAHMOOD BIN SIDDEEQ AL-MINSHAWI

حفظه الله

### BIRTH

30<sup>th</sup> October 1943 in Minshaah, Sohaag.

### EARLY STUDENT DAYS

He memorized the Quraan at the age of eight by his father, Sheikh Sayyid Siddeeq Al-Minshawi. He learnt the rules of recitation and the Seven Qira'at under Sheikh 'Aamir 'Uthmaan in the Ma'hadul Qira'aat. He received his certificate from here as well. During this time he used to attend lessons at al-Azhar as well.

Around the mid-fifties and the early sixties, he began gaining fame and his voice traversed out of Sa'eed and to all the areas of Egypt.

After his approval at the Radio Station in 1970, his voice travelled to the East and the West and to the entire world. At times special invitations were extended to him to go to certain countries, while at other times he was sent by the 'Wazaratul-Awqaaf' to certain countries.

### SHEIKH MAHMOOD SIDDEEQ AL-MINSHAawi'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES

He visited the entire Arab world with the exception of Algeria and Yemen. Similarly, he visited Indonesia, Pakistan, London, Paris, the United States, Russia, Iran, South Africa and in Ramadhaan 2005 he went to Turkey.

Sheikh Mahmood Minshawi used to recite in the style and manner of his late brother. He began official recitals in the 70's and for many years he followed his brother's method of reciting the Quraan. Then in the early 1980's he developed his own style and method.

When I visited Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi at his residence, then during the course of our discussion, I asked



him if he used to read like his brother. He replied, "We are one family, so it is obvious that one would follow the other. Sheikh Muhammad used to read like my father, and I read like Muhammad and my son Siddeeq reads like me. Yes, there are those times when one is overcome by a different condition and mood, then the reading may differ."

If the present day great Qurra are counted on the surface of the earth, then Sheikh Mahmood Minshaawi's name is amongst the first three.

#### **AL-MUS'HAFUL MURATTAL**

Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi has four recordings of the 'Mus'haful Murattal'. He has recorded one for the Qatar Radio Station, another one for the U.A.E. Radio Station, a third one which is known as the "Mu'allim", for the London Station and the fourth one for the Egyptian Station, Izhaa'atul-Quraan-ul-Kareem.

#### **SHEIKH MAHMOOD SIDDEEQ AL-MINSHAAWI AND THE RADIO STATION**

Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi is also amongst those Qurra' who had been reciting over Radio before being approved by the Station. This was because the head of the Radio Station at that time, Muhammad Ameen Hammad had once heard his recitation at the 'Haflatul-Israa' where great Ulama and prominent personalities were present. It was upon his guarantee that Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi read over the television channel for half an hour from Surah An-Najam. He received a lot of applause and won the hearts of people. After this, he went forward and undertook the examination to recite over Radio. He was not approved the first time and was told to come back after a year. It was in 1970 that he was accepted as a Qari of the radio station.

His first official broadcast over the radio was on the first of Rajab 1970 from Masjid Sayyidah Zainab (R.A.) wherein he recited from Surah Taubah. Thereafter, in the same year in

Ramadhān his recital of Suratul-Fajr was broadcasted from Masjid Husain.

Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi has urged and appealed to the radio station to resume playing the complete Quraan set which was recorded in the voices of the following six Qurra; Sheikh Ali Hajjaj as-Sawaisi, Sheikh Mahmood Husain Mansoor, Qari Ahmad Aamir, Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi, Qari Ahmad N'eena and Sheikh Shahaat Anwar, just as they play the Quraan sets of the five great Qurra, Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il, Sheikh Mahmood Khalil Husri, Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna and Sheikh AbdulBasit. The former used to be played, but some jealous person put a stop to it!

Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq Al-Minshaawi is the official reciter at Masjid Imaam As-Shaf'ee, but he is seldom seen there on a Friday because of the many invitations he receives to go and recite in other Masaajid all over the country.

Presently he hardly reads in Cairo. He is most of the time invited to places like Aswaan, Luxor and many other areas. In Cairo, he is mostly invited to recite in 'Azaa's.

On the eve of his departure from South Africa, on the 23th of January 2004, Sheikh Mahmood al-Minshaawi wrote the following upon my request while at Dr. Ahmad Jina's residence in Roshnee;

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

في هذا اليوم المبارك وهذه الجلسة الطيبة شرفنا بالإخوة الأحياء . . . وإنها لفرصة طيبة والله أسأل أن

يجمعنا دائما على المحبة والأخاء. وفي الحقيقة مسلمي جنوب أفريقيا يمتازون بالكرم وحسن الضيافة

والتواضع. والأغلبية تحفظ القرآن الكريم وتحب قارئ القرآن. فجزاهم الله أحسن الجزاء ومتعهم بكامل

الصحة وموفور العزة والكرامة. وأدعوا الله سبحانه وتعالى أن نلقاهم قريبا في بلدهم الثانية مصر الحبيبة.

وأقدم أجمل آيات التهاني بقرب عيد الأضحى المبارك وكل عام وأنتم وجميع الأهل والمحبين بخير وعافية -

القدنى

محمد صديق السنبلوى

خادم القرآن الكريم



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الغدائي

محمود صديق المنشاوي

مدام القرآن الكريم



### TRANSLATION

142

On this blessed day, and in this pure gathering, we are honoured with the (company) of the beloved brothers . . . indeed it is a pure moment, I ask Allah Ta'aala to always gather us upon love and brotherhood. In actual fact, the Muslims of South Africa are recognised with their nobleness, good hospitality and humbleness. Most of them memorize the Glorious Qur'aan and they love the Qari of the Glorious Qur'aan. May Allah Ta'aala reward them with the best of rewards and May he grant them complete health, honour and dignity. I make Dua to Allah Ta'aala that we meet them shortly in their second city which is beloved Egypt. And I present to them the most beautiful greetings with the proximity of the blessed occasion of Eid-ul-Adha; may you and all your families and loved ones be in goodness and safety.

Al-Qari  
Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi  
Khaadim of the Glorious Qur'aan

**Amongst his sons** is Qari Siddeeq, who was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 in Cairo. From childhood, he stayed mostly with his grandfather, Sheikh Siddeeq al-Minshaawi, and memorized a great portion of the Glorious Quraan by him, until he (the grandfather) passed away in 1984. He then completed his Hifz by Sheikh Mitwalli Qasim, and revised it by Sheikh Sayyid AbdulMageed. His father, Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq was desirous that his son accompany him when he went to recite in '*Ihtifalaat*' and '*Ma'aatim*' since a very young age. Therefore, it is obvious that Qari Siddeeq is one of the main reciters in those functions which his father used to attend, especially in Sa'eed.

The Minshaawiyah family wanted to change Siddeeq's name to 'Ali', after the great Qari Sheikh Ali Mahmood, but he insisted to go by the name of his fore-fathers. Qari Siddeeq also has a son who was born around the year 2000. His name is Mahmood (bin Siddeeq bin Mahmood bin Siddeeq).

143





### TRANSLATION

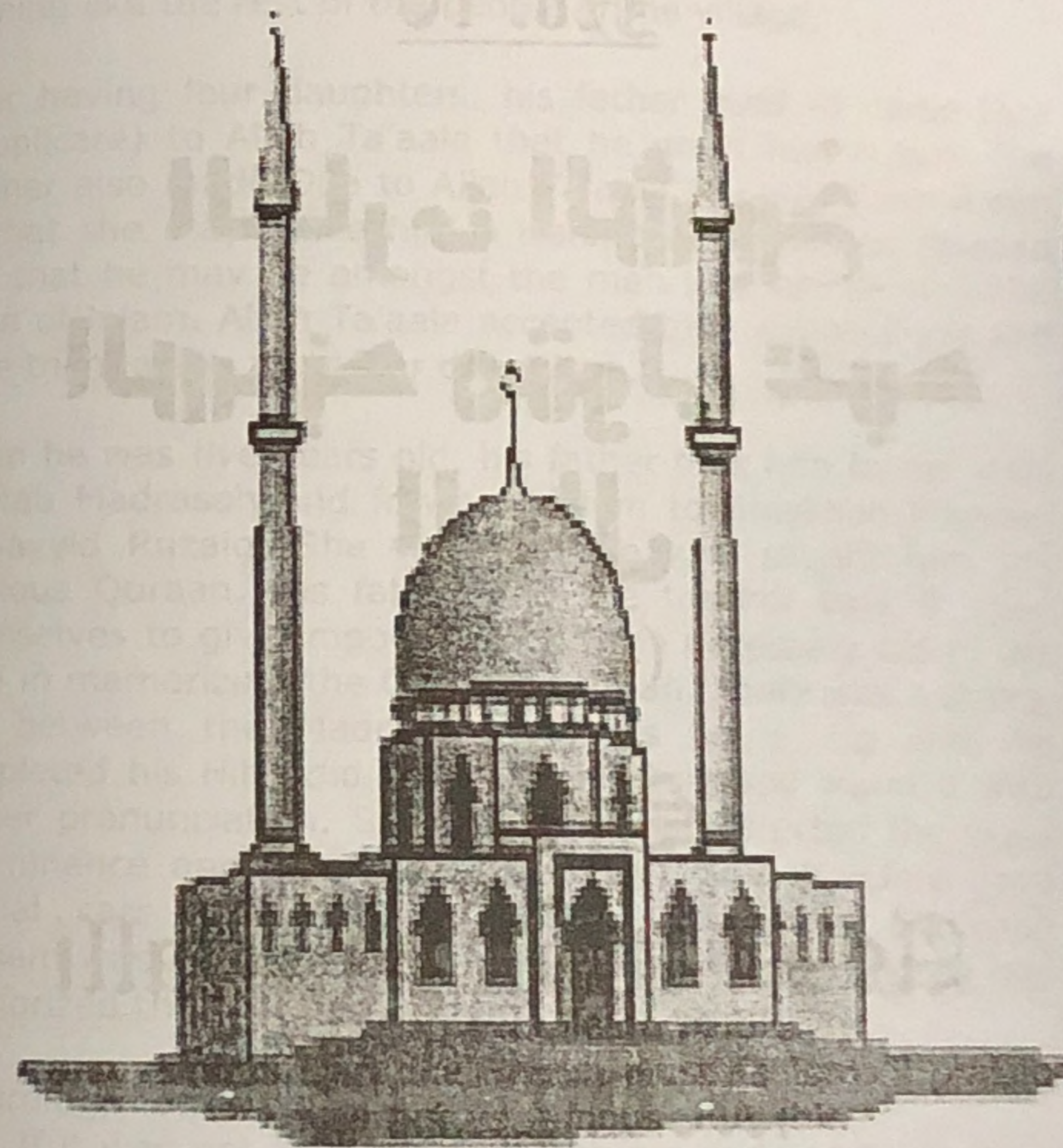
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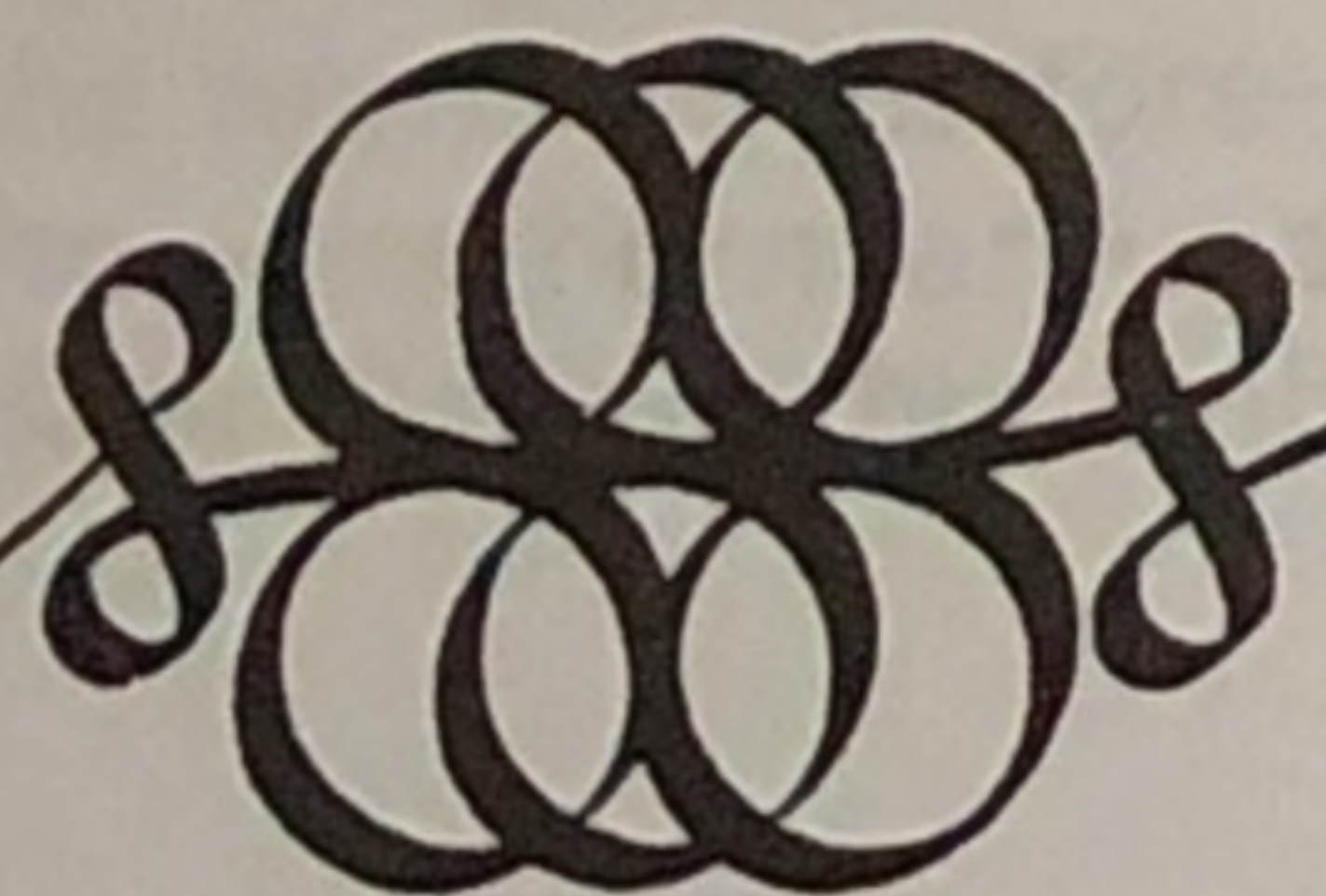
No. 10

# القارئ الشهير المهاجر المتولي عبد العال

(حفظه الله)

Sheikh  
As-Sayyid Mitwalli  
Abdul 'Aal

Hafizhahullah



## SHEIKH AS-SAYYID MITWALLI ABDUL 'AAL

حفظه الله

### BIRTH

26 July 1947, in Fadadnah, a village in the Markaz Faqoos district in the eastern province. His family's occupation was farming like the rest of the people of the village.

After having four daughters, his father used to make Dua (supplicate) to Allah Ta'aala that he grant him a son. The mother also made Dua to Allah Ta'aala to grant them a son so that she may make him a Hafiz of the Glorious Quraan and that he may be amongst the men who are serving the Deen of Islam. Allah Ta'aala accepted their supplication and gave them a son after four daughters.

When he was five years old, his father took him to the local Maktab Madrasah and forwarded him to Sheikhah Maryam as-Sayyid Ruzaiq. She was the one who taught him the Glorious Quraan. His father and the teacher took it upon themselves to give importance and the necessary aid to the child in memorizing the Glorious Quraan. There was a strong link between the Madrasah and his home, up until he completed his Hifz, did his revision (Dor) and learnt it with proper pronunciation. Sheikhah Maryam detected the signs of eminence and glory in this student. She therefore gave spacial care and attention to his education. Sheikhah Maryam was a Hifz teacher under whom many children had memorized the Glorious Quraan.

Regarding his childhood, Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli;  
". . . If it was not for Sheikhah Maryam and her grace upon me, I would not have managed to memorize the Glorious Quraan with such perfection. I still remember her good nature and her method of teaching as well as her patience with her students. She used to always quote the following hadeeth of Rasululallah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam to us;





No. 10

القارئ الرشيد  
الرازي متولي عبد  
العال  
(حفظه الله)

Sheikh  
As-Sayyid Mitwalli  
Abdul 'Aal  
Hafizhahullah



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((The best amongst you are those who learn the Quraan and teach it.))"

When the young talented child, Sayyid Mitwalli, reached the age of sixteen, his father enrolled him in the secondary school. He did not neglect his Quraan, as he had realized that the Glorious Quraan is a treasure of this world as well as of the hereafter. He had memorized the entire Quraan by the age of twelve.

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli was recognized by his friends as a 'Qari.' The teachers were also pleased with him. He used to recite at the school assembly every morning, as well as at various gatherings and functions. He used to be invited to recite in religious gatherings, Ma'aatim and other occasions. People loved him because of his recitation and suggested to his father to take him to Sheikh Ahmad As-Saawi Abdul Mu'ti to study the science of Qira'aat. His father accepted this opinion and took him to the Sheikh. The Sheikh welcomed the youngster and taught him the rules of Tajweed according to the narration of *Hafs 'an 'Aasim* R.A. When the Sheikh passed away, his student, Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli was very grieved, because he was a man of perfection and he was the one who taught him the rules of recitation to such an extent that it enabled him to recite next to the great Qurra'. Soon thereafter, a time came when Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli took the place of Sheikh Ahmad As-Saawi. He became the 'Muqri' of his area, Fadadanah. Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli did not stop here, rather his love for the Quraan led him to the neighboring town of Qaryat-ul-'Areen, where he undertook the studies of 'Uloom-ul-Quraan and Qiraa'ah at the hands of Sheikh Taha al-Wakeel. He received his 'Ijazah' (certificate) of *Warsh 'an Nafi'* from him.

Thereafter, he became known and famous in the entire Sharqiyyah (Eastern) province. He began receiving invitations from all over Sharqiyyah. This, according to the Sheikh himself, is "due to the grace of Allah and the blessings of the Quraan".

There were occasions when he had the opportunity of reciting with great Qurra' like Sheikh Mustafa Ismail, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna, Sheikh AbdulBasit, Sheikh Hamdi az-Zaamil and Sheikh Abdus Samad az-Zanati.

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli mentions;

"When I was twenty years old, my fame had spread to all the neighboring provinces. I used to be invited to recite in the Ma'aatim of great people with other famous Qurra'. Not once did I feel overwhelmed when reciting with the great Qaris. This was because I had learnt at the hands of one of the most famous Hifz teachers, and that was Sheikhah Maryam R.A. I am still proud of the fact that she was my teacher. Initially, I never bothered about the fee which I received to recite. Around 1961/62 I used to get L.E. 100. In 1970 I was invited to recite at a Ma'tam with Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna. I was so excited to recite next to him on the same platform, that even if I did not receive any recompense, I would not mind because this opportunity was even greater than the recompense. Thereafter, there were occasions where I recited side by side with Sheikh AbdulBasit, Sheikh Mustafa Ismail and Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood At-Tablawi."

By 1980, he was known all over the country, and in that very year, he was invited abroad. His fame spread to certain Islamic states through his cassette recordings. This made him the most famous Qari 'off air' because he had not yet applied to get approval over the Radio. He had surpassed many of the great Qurra' who were approved by the Radio, as far as fame and the people's love for him was concerned. The cause for this was his strong voice – which was free from screaming – and his long breath, his ability to recite with melody and his understanding of the meanings of the Glorious Quraan. Initially, he was different from other Qurra' as far as the wearing of the 'Tarboosh', because he wore the Moroccan 'Tarboosh' and not the one the Egyptian Qurra and Ulama generally wear.



### **QARI OF THE 'إذاعة العربية الإسلامية'-AND HIS VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli did not join the Egyptian Radio Station till the age of fifty. He has recorded many recitals for certain other Islamic Stations. His recitals are broadcast in Jordan, Iran and a few of the Gulf States.

He mentions;

"The real reason for my fame is that I keep Allah Ta'aala in front of me whilst reciting His Kitaab. When a reciter is sincere for the sake of Allah Ta'aala, the Glorious Quraan, and for the people, then he will only find acceptance. I maintain a good relation with people, especially with my fellow Qurra associates, however I keep it at a certain limit because I am always engaged in revising the Glorious Quraan in my free time. As far as imitating others is concerned, I am not for that, because the one who imitates will soon become unpopular in the eyes of the people, because people always want the original. Yes, initially every Qari begins by imitating, but in due time it is necessary for him to develop his own style by which he is recognized."

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli was desirous of having a son. Allah Ta'aala granted his wish and he has a child who is memorizing the Glorious Quraan in the same Maktab Madrasah which he went to in his childhood.

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli 'Abdul 'Aal has travelled to many Arab, non-Arab and African countries to enliven the nights in the months of Ramadhaan by reciting the Glorious Quraan in all the major Masaajid in those countries. Amongst the countries he has travelled to is Lebanon, Iran, Nigeria, and many more.

In October 2001 he visited South Africa where he read in many Masaajid. The recitation of Surah An-Najm and Al-Qamar on the 15<sup>th</sup> night of Sha'baan in the Zinniaville Masjid, Rustenburg is a pearl amongst the pearls of recitation.

Wherever he goes, there are huge numbers of people who love him, his voice, his method and way of reciting. This love and kindness which is shown to him is more valuable to him than everything else.

During his trip to South Africa in 2001, he wrote the following upon my request;

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

هذه معلومات للاخ العزيز الشيخ عبد الله عبد الحميد عن تاريخ حياتي.  
أنا السيد متولى عبد العال / بلدتي الفدادنه مركز فاقوس محافظة الشرقية جمهورية مصر العربية. أنا من مواليد ١٩٤٧/٧/٢٦ م. وبدأت حفظ القرآن الكريم في سن الخامسة وأتممت حفظه في سن العاشرة. وتعلمت علوم التجويد حفص عن عاصم ورواية ورش و قالون عن نافع. كان حفظ القرآن عند المرحومة الشيخة مريم ، ورواية حفص عند المرحوم الشيخ أحمد الصاوى ورواية ورش وقالون عند المرحوم الشيخ طه الوكيل وعلوم القرآن في سنتين والحمد لله كنت أدعى في احياء اليالى وكان الناس يحبوننى حبا كثيرا بفضل الله والقرآن الكريم والحمد لله على عطاء القرآن لأننا بالقرآن نكون أعز الناس.

### **TRANSLATION**

This information is for Brother Sheikh Abdullah AbdulHamid about my life. I am As-Sayyid Mitwalli Abdul 'Aal. My town is al-Fadadnah, in the Faqoos district of al-Sharqiyyah province, Egypt. I was born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 1947. I began Hifz of the Qur'aan when I was five years old and I completed it at the age of ten. I studied the sciences of Tajweed according to the narration of Hafs and the narration of Qaloon and Warsh. I memorized the Qur'aan by Sheikhah Maryam, and studied the rules of Tajweed according to the narration of Hafs by Sheikh Ahmad As-Saawi, and the narrations of Qaloon and Warsh by Sheikh Taha Wakeel. I also studied the sciences of the Glorious Qur'aan in two years, Alhamdulillah. I am invited to enliven night



### **QARI OF THE 'إذاعة العربية الإسلامية'-AND HIS VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli did not join the Egyptian Radio Station till the age of fifty. He has recorded many recitals for certain other Islamic Stations. His recitals are broadcast in Jordan, Iran and a few of the Gulf States.

He mentions;

"The real reason for my fame is that I keep Allah Ta'aala in front of me whilst reciting His Kitaab. When a reciter is sincere for the sake of Allah Ta'aala, the Glorious Quraan, and for the people, then he will only find acceptance. I maintain a good relation with people, especially with my fellow Qurra associates, however I keep it at a certain limit because I am always engaged in revising the Glorious Quraan in my free time. As far as imitating others is concerned, I am not for that, because the one who imitates will soon become unpopular in the eyes of the people, because people always want the original. Yes, initially every Qari begins by imitating, but in due time it is necessary for him to develop his own style by which he is recognized."

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli was desirous of having a son. Allah Ta'aala granted his wish and he has a child who is memorizing the Glorious Quraan in the same Maktab Madrasah which he went to in his childhood.

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli 'Abdul 'Aal has travelled to many Arab, non-Arab and African countries to enliven the nights in the months of Ramadhaan by reciting the Glorious Quraan in all the major Masaajid in those countries. Amongst the countries he has travelled to is Lebanon, Iran, Nigeria, and many more.

In October 2001 he visited South Africa where he read in many Masaajid. The recitation of Surah An-Najm and Al-Qamar on the 15<sup>th</sup> night of Sha'baan in the Zinniaville Masjid, Rustenburg is a pearl amongst the pearls of recitation.

Wherever he goes, there are huge numbers of people who love him, his voice, his method and way of reciting. This love and kindness which is shown to him is more valuable to him than everything else.

During his trip to South Africa in 2001, he wrote the following upon my request;

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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gatherings, people love me greatly due to the virtue of the Glorious Qur'aan. All praise is due to Allah Ta'aala for granting us the Glorious Qur'aan, because it is through the Qur'aan that we are the most honoured people.

Presently he is the head of the Qurra' in the Eastern Province as well as the head of all the Hifz classes. He is also appointed as the "Wakeel" in his area to perform Nikahs.

### **THE RADIO... AND HIS FAME**

Concerning joining the Radio, he says;

"Now the time has come to join the Radio station . . . and I ask Allah Ta'aala to grant me the ability to serve the Glorious Quraan through the Radio which is an instrument that has entered every house and vehicle in and out of Egypt. The Radio has done a great favour to all the Qurra'."

It should be mentioned that at the time of preparing this book, Sheikh Mitwalli was already approved by the Radio Station.

Sheikh Sayyid Mitwalli is regarded as one of those Qurra' who has penetrated the hearts of people and has written his name in the register of history by his sacrifices, efforts and hard work, like other Qurra' such as Sheikh Gaudah Abu Saud and Sheikh Abdul Haq al-Qadhi etc.



قرآن کی



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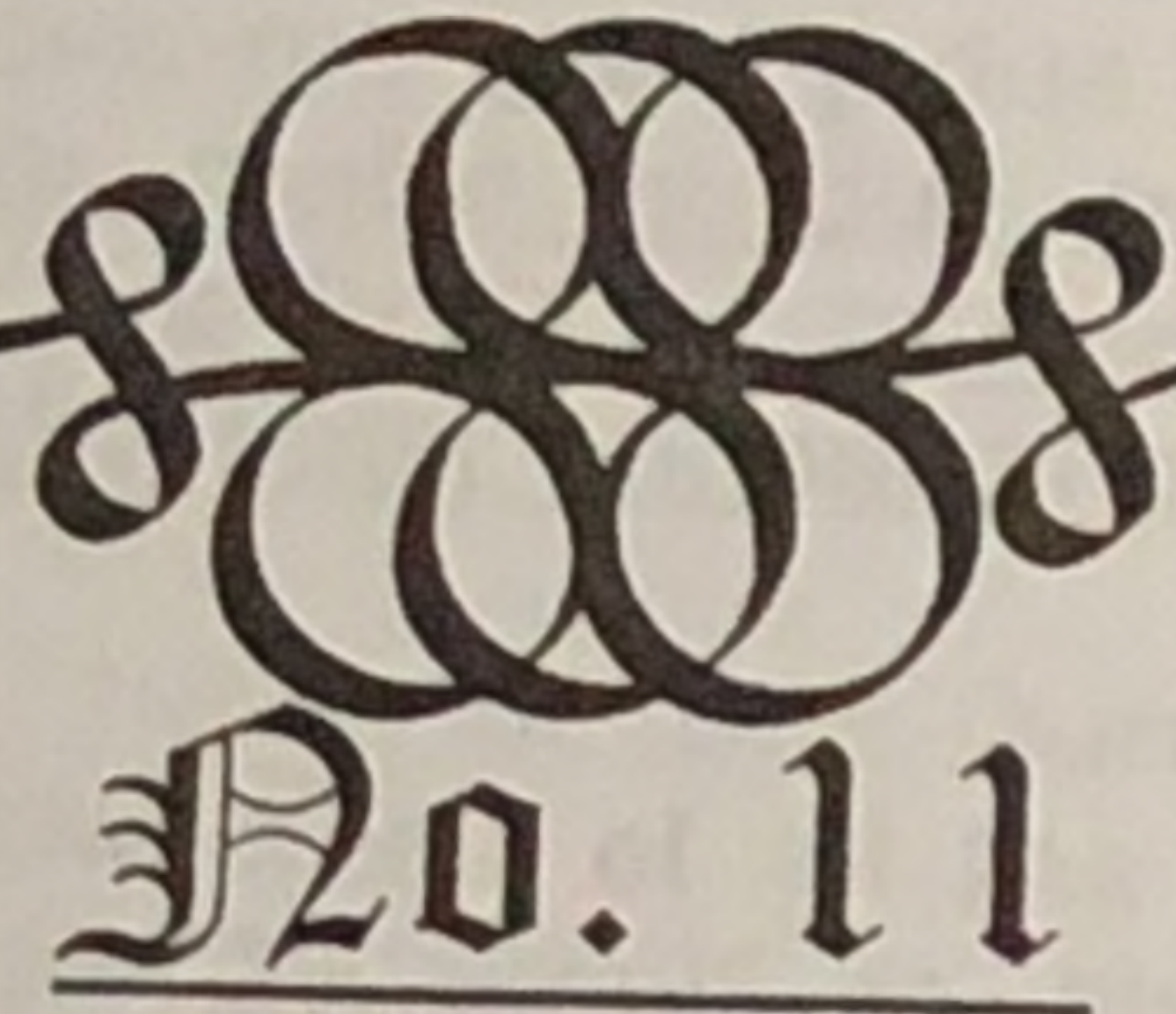
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قرآن کریم





No. 11

# القارئ الدكتور أحمد أحمد زهير (حفظه الله)

Qaari Doctor  
Ahmad Ahmad  
Na'eena  
Hafizhahullah



## QAARI DOCTOR AHMAD AHMAD NA'EENA

حفظه الله

### BIRTH

15<sup>th</sup> of March 1954, in Matoobis which is a city in the Kafrash-Sheikh province.

Indeed this Qari is an actual copy of the king of all Qurra' in our history, the noble Sheikh Qaari Mustafa Ismail R.A.

Qari Dr. Ahmad Na'eena memorized the Glorious Quraan by Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Shawwa and learnt it with Tajweed by Sheikh Ameen Al-Hilaali.

He spent most of his childhood and much of his time later with Sheikh Ameen Hilaali, and imitated his voice and style of reading. He also achieved a lot from Sheikh Muhammad Fareed Nu'maan, by whom he learnt the seven Qira'at and Tafseer.

Once during 1960, he accompanied a group of friends of primary school to listen to Sheikh Mustafa Ismail's recitation in the town of Deebee. This was the first time when he heard Sheikh Mustafa Isma'il.

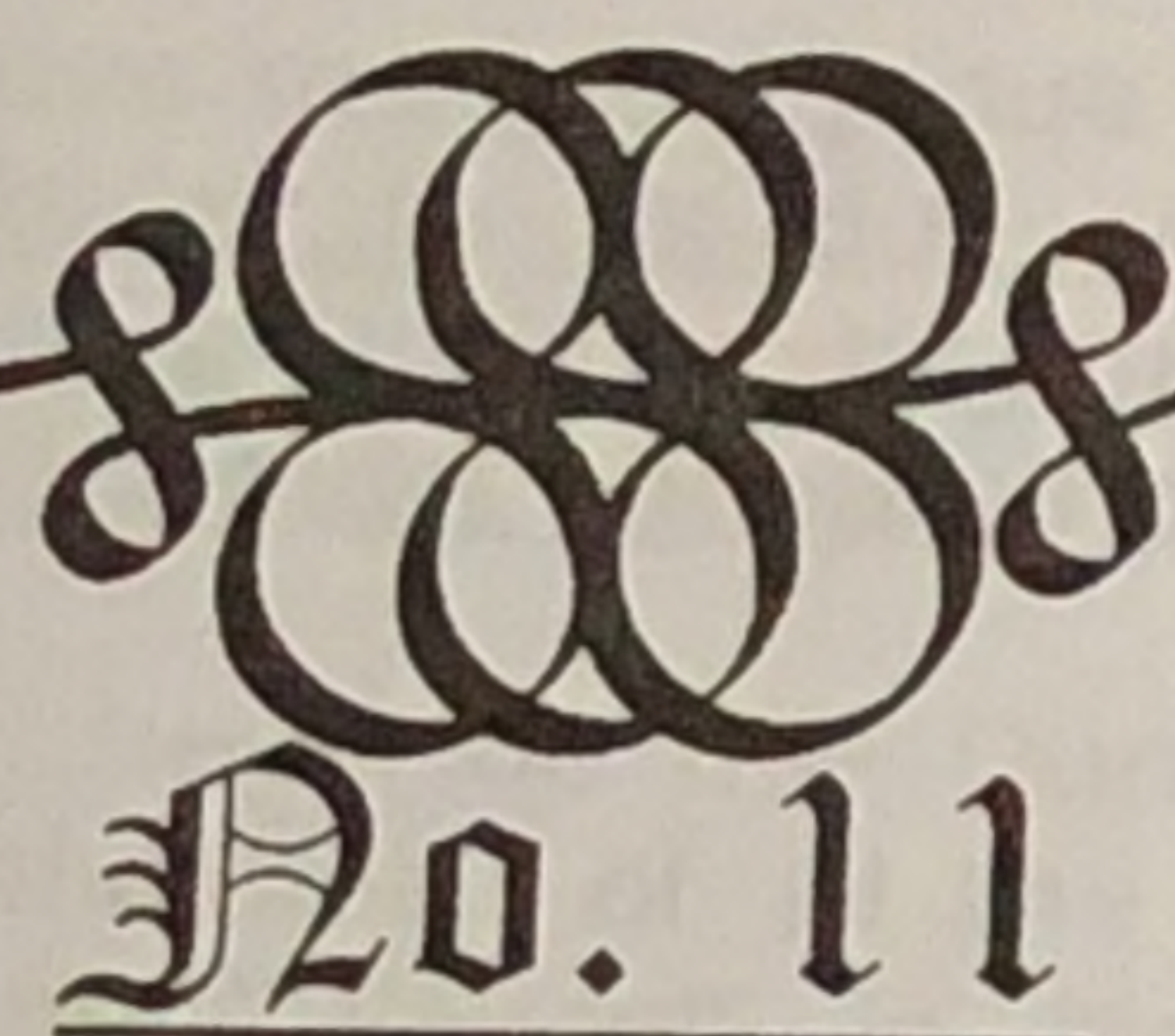
Qari Dr. Na'eena recited the Quraan over the Radio for the first time on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 1979, in the Zhikra of Sheikh Taha Fashni.

He had been appointed by the Wazaaratul Awqaaf to read the weekly Qiraa'at in a certain Masjid although he had not been approved by the Radio Station.

Qari Dr. Na'eena got his degree of Bachelor in Medicine from the University in Alexandria in 1977.

He also recites in the 'Zhikra' of the late President Gamaal Abdul Nasar on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September, annually.





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President Anwar Sadat had elected him as the doctor in the presidency. He used to accompany the president on all his journeys, and he also used to open all the parliament sessions by reciting a portion of the Glorious Quraan. This is also how he gained international fame. After the passing of the President on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1981, he left the presidency and joined another Medical Center.

He was appointed as the reciter of Masjid Al-Husain in Cairo in the mid 1980's after the demise of the great Qari, Sheikh Abdul Basit. He has also attained first position in an international Qiraat competition in Indonesia.

Qari Dr. Na'eena says; "I am truly indebted to, and I am an admirer of Sheikh Mustafa Ismail. His voice was beautiful and strong, and he had total control of moving between different "Maqamaat" with great amount of ease. No one can make Waqf (pause) as he used to. He had the power to recite difficult words with beautiful and melodious tunes without it interfering in the correct pronunciation of that word. Together with this he had the power of spiritually affecting the listener. Sheikh Mustafa Ismail was a singing nightingale."

In the mid 1980's he recorded a *Mus'haful Murattal* for the Radio Station just as he has recorded a *Mus'haful Mujawwad* over a period of four years -1992 to 1996. He has also recorded a *Mus'haful Murattal* for the Abu Dhabi Radio Station.

Dr. Ahmad Na'eena had the opportunity to recite in front of the holy Ka'bah in Makka-tul-Mukarramah. He mentioned; It is something else to recite in front of the Ka'bah, I cannot describe the feeling when I read there!

The author of the book 'Abaaqiratut tilaawah', Shukri al-Qaadhi says; "During a lengthy discussion with Dr. Ahmad Na'eena, he informed me that the greatest bounty which Allah bestowed upon him was a dream of Rasullullah ﷺ just

before his recitation at the end of an Islamic function held in Sameer Amees hotel in 1991.

Dr. Na'eena says; "On that day I partook of my meals and went to rest, acting upon the advice given to me by the late Muhammad Abdul Wahhab, who said that sleep is of utmost importance before any recitation, because sleep and rest are a tonic for the voice. So while sleeping, I saw Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ a little in front of me and I was (walking) behind him. We reached the door of a Masjid similar to that of Masjid Sayyidah Nafeesah and the door was closed. I placed both my palms on the shoulders of Rasullullah ﷺ and pushed the door. It opened, and Rasullullah ﷺ entered the Masjid and I followed him. The Masjid was completely empty (of people). He (ﷺ) looked towards the 'Dikkah' (seat of reciting which is kept in the Masjid) and he gestured to me saying "There! You may read!" That evening I recited Surah Hujurat and the first few Ayaat of Surah Qaaf. I never read like that before in my entire life. It was on that same night that Sheikh Ahmad Zeene and Sheikh Abdul Wahhab Abdul Waasi'- the minister of Haj - called me, and after a few days I had the opportunity of reciting on Mount 'Arafaat!!!"

Qari Dr. Ahmad Ahmad N'eena visited South Africa numerous times. First in October 1994, twice in 1998, once to Cape Town and the second time to Gauteng. Again in September 2001, and once again in April 2004, when he went to Botswana as well.

Dr. Ahmad N'eena is married to Dr. Inaas Ash-Sha'raawi - who is a lecturer at a Medical Collage- and has three daughters, Yasmeen, Yusra and Yaara.





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No. 12

الشيخ محمد جبريل  
(حفظه الله)

Sheikh  
Muhammad Jibreel  
Hafizhahullah



## SHEIKH MUHAMMAD JIBREEL

حفظه الله

### BIRTH

10 April 1958 in 'Tahooria' which is in Shabeen Al-Qanatir in the Qalyubiah province.

Fathers name; Muhammad As-Sayyid Hasanain who is the reciter at Masjid Sayyidah A'ysha R.A. and is over 80 years of age. (This was as far as in 1999.)

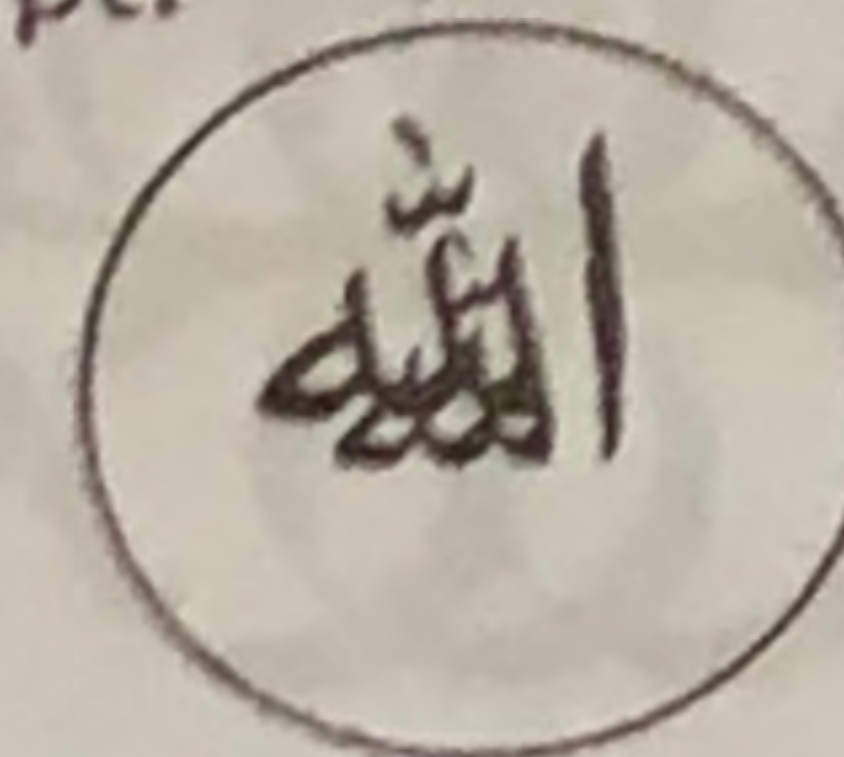
Amongst his Ustaads are; Sheikh 'Aamir Uthmaan, who is buried in "Baqee-ul-Gharqad" (Jannatul Baqee').

Sheikh Muhammad Jibreel took first position in the international Quraan competition which was held in Makkah Mukarramah in 1986. He had competed with over 6000 people.

Sheikh Jibreel has the following desires and hopes;

- To lead the people in Salaah in Masjidul Aqsa once it is freed, and also to lead the people in the Harams of Makkah and Madina.
- He's efforts of initiating a *Dar Aalimiyyah* for the memorization of the *Glorious Quraan*, in Egypt must become a reality.
- That Allah grants him the honour of being buried next to his Ustaad Sheikh 'Aamir Uthmaan in Baqee-ul-Gharqad in Madina-tul-Munawwarah, and that he be raised next to him as well.

Qari Muhammad Jibreel is amongst the Imaams of Salaat-ut-Taraweeh in Egypt. He leads over four million people in Taraweeh annually during the (last ten nights of the) month of Ramadhaan in Masjid 'Amr bin 'Aas which is regarded as the biggest Masjid in Egypt.







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No. 13

القارئ أحمد  
بن الشيخ محمود  
على الربنا  
(حفظه الله)

Qari  
Ahmad Bin Mahmood  
Ali al-Banna  
Hafizhahullah



QARI AHMAD MAHMOOD ALI AL-BANNA

حفظه الله

**BIRTH**

9<sup>TH</sup> of April 1955.

He is the son of the great Qaari, Sheikh Mahmood Ali Al-Banna. He has been highly influenced by his father in his ways and habits as well as in his recitation.

**EDUCATION**

He memorized the Quraan by his father then learnt the science of Qira'at by his uncle, Sheikh Mustafa Ali Al-Banna. His first recitation to the public was in the city of Tanta' in 1986.

He is the official Qari of Masjid Mahmood Ali Al-Banna in Al-Manufiyyah.

**QARI AHMAD'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES**

He has travelled to the following countries; Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Lebanon, Germany, Italy, Scotland, London, South Korea, France and Iran. He also goes to Kuwait annually.

Allah Ta'aala has blessed him with three children. A son, 'Amar and two daughters; Salmah and Deenah.







No. 14

القارئ طارق بن  
الشيخ عبد الباقط  
(حفظه الله)

Qaari  
Taariq Abdul Basit  
Abdus Samad  
Hafizhahullah



QAARI TARIQ BIN SHEIKH ABDULBASIT  
MUHAMMAD ABDUSSAMAD

Birth

29<sup>th</sup> of July 1959.

EDUCATION

He memorized the Quraan by Sheikh AbdulAziz al-Bakri, and revised it by his father. He acquired the Tajweed certificate in 1994.

It is said that he is the inheritor of the voice of his late father Sheikh AbdulBasit R.A. The Qurra that follow the style and method of Sheikh AbdulBasit are; Sheikh Mahmood Abu Sa'ud, Ali Hasan As-Sawaisi and Muhammadie Buhairi.

Qari Tariq is the appointed reciter of Masjid Mustafa 'Amar in Al-Muhandiseen.

QARI TARIQ'S VISITS TO OTHER COUNTRIES

Amongst the countries he has visited are South Africa, Belgium (where he stayed for three months to spread the Glorious Quraan), Morocco, Saudi, Amman, Malaysia and the U.A.E.



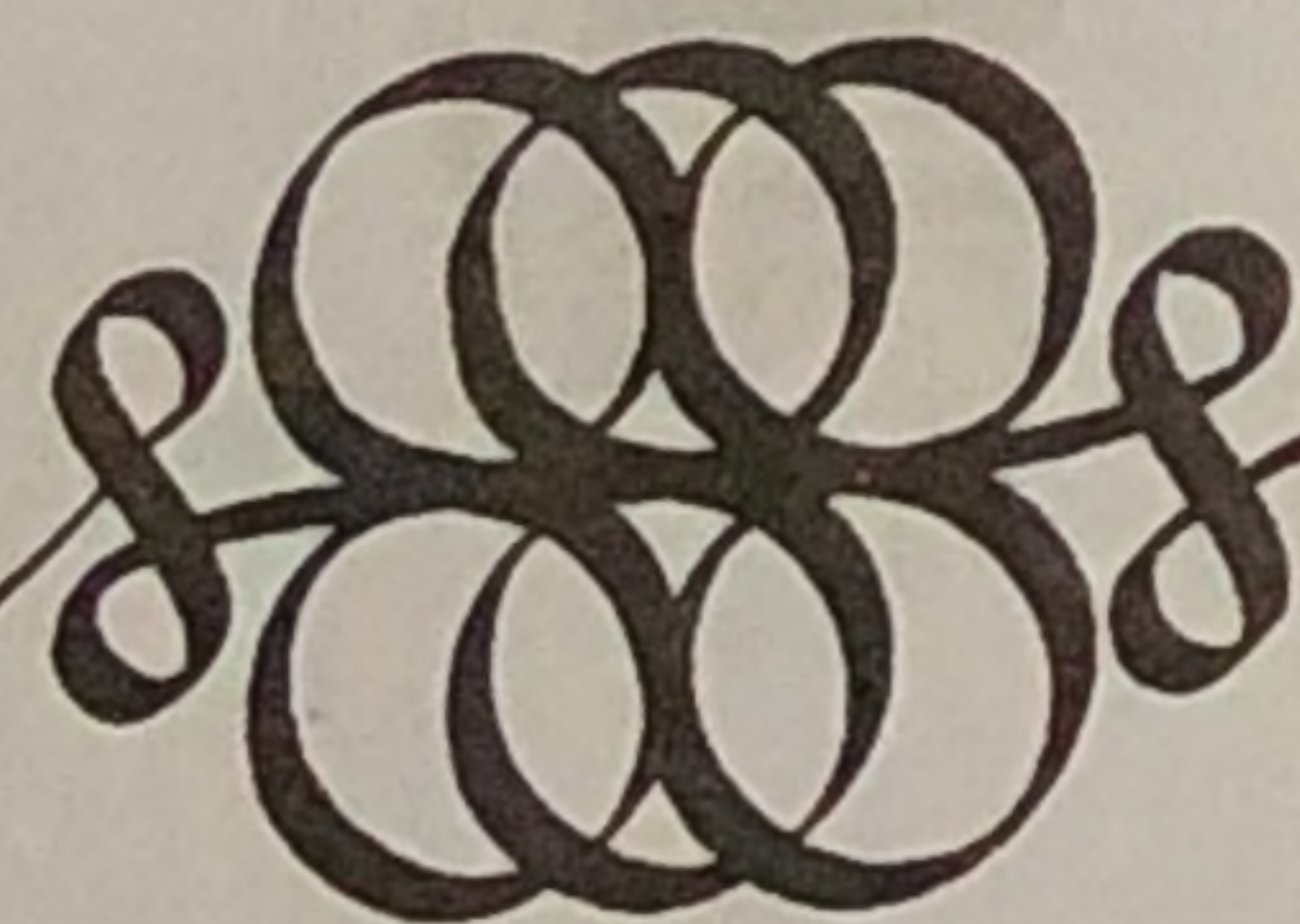




No. 14

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(حفظه الله)

Qaari  
Taariq Abdul Basit  
Abdus Samad  
Hafizhahullah



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### LIST OF QURAA'

The following is a list of those Qurra who have been approved by the إذاعة القرآن الكريم (the Quraanic Radio Station) and television in Cairo.

This list has been taken from; 'Abaqiratut-tilawati fil qarnil 'Ishreen', and is according to the Arabic "ABJAD" (أبجد) sequence. It was compiled in 1999.

1. Sheikh Ibrahim Mansoori.
2. Sheikh Ibrahim Sulaiman.
3. Sheikh Ibrahim Jawhari.
4. Sheikh Ibrahim Sha'sha'ee.
5. Sheikh Ibrahim Fat'hullah Iskandari.
6. Sheikh Abul Aynayn Sha'eesha'
7. Sheikh Ahmad Abul Ma'ati.
8. Sheikh Ahmad Abu Talib.
9. Qari Dr. Ahmad Ahmad Na'eena'.
10. Sheikh Ahmad As-Sayyid Al-Baleeti.
11. Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Shahaat Ar-Ruzaiqi.
12. Sheikh Ahmad Hasan Abul Farj.
13. Sheikh Ahmad Hasan Abu Zaid.
14. Sheikh Ahmad Sulaiman Sa'dani.
15. Sheikh Ahmad 'Abdur-Rahman Az-Zari'.
16. Sheikh Ahmad 'Ali 'Abdut-Tawwaab.
17. Qari Ahmad Muhammad 'Aamir.
18. Sheikh Ismail Hilmi Hijaab.
19. Sheikh Ismail Muhammad Qanawi.
20. Sheikh Al-Hasan Muhammad Abdullah.
21. Sheikh As-Saeed AbdusSamad Zanati.
22. Sheikh As-Saeed Muhammad Al-Firaash.
23. Sheikh As-Sayyid Ibrahim Daif.
24. Sheikh As-Sayyid Bayyumi Sawaf.
25. Sheikh As-Sayyid Mitwalli Abdul 'Aal
26. Sheikh Ash-Shahaat Muhammad Anwar.
27. Sheikh Anas Hamoodah Jaad.
28. Sheikh Jum'ah Mukhtar Haamid.

29. Sheikh Haamid Ahmad Salaah
30. Sheikh Hasan Abdul 'Aal Qasim.
31. Sheikh Hasan Muhammad 'Audh.
32. Sheikh Husain Muhamamd 'Audh.
33. Sheikh Husain Muhamamd Az-Zaawi.
34. Sheikh Husain Yusuf Al-Qarnawi.
35. Sheikh Hilmi Abdul-Hamid Jamal.
36. Sheikh Hamdi Mahmood Az-Zaamil.
37. Sheikh Hamzah Al-Maghaazi Hantoor.
38. Sheikh Hamzah Abdul Fattah Al-Halawaani.
39. Sheikh Raaghib Mustafa Ghalwash.
40. Sheikh Rabee' Ali Zain.
41. Sheikh Rafeeq Abdur-Rauf.
42. Sheikh Zaki Ahmad Ismail.
43. Sheikh Saeed Hasan Hafiz.
44. Sheikh Saeed Ali Jundi.
45. Sheikh Sayyid Ahmad As-Sabu'.
46. Sheikh Sayyid Abdush-Shafee Hilaal.
47. Sheikh Sayyid Atiyyah Nada.
48. Sheikh Sayyid Muhammad Naqshbandi.
49. Sheikh Shukar Muhammad Abdur-Rahamn.
50. Sheikh Sh'baan Abdul Aziz As-Sayyaad.
51. Sheikh Salaahud-Deen Abdur-Rahman.
52. Sheikh Salaah Abdur-Razzaq Shamsud-Deen.
53. Sheikh Salaah Abdullah Gamal.
54. Sheikh Salaah Yusuf .Muhmmad.
55. Sheikh Tala'at Abdul Maujood Hawaash.
56. Sheikh Taha Mursi Al-Fashni.
57. Sheikh 'Ashoor Al-Bahraawi.
- 58. Sheikh 'Abdul-Basit Abdus-Samad. \***
59. Sheikh 'Abdut-Tawwab Al-Basatini.
60. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hafiz Sayyid Rajab.
61. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Al-Basusi.
62. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Haamid 'Ammar.
63. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Al-Fahhaam.
64. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Sakar.
65. Sheikh 'Abdur-Razzaq Al-Jundaali.
66. Sheikh 'Abdur-Rahman Ad-Darwi.
67. Sheikh 'Abdur-Rahman Muhammad Salamah.



## LIST OF QURAA'

The following is a list of those Qurra who have been approved by the إذاعة القرآن الكريم (the Quraanic Radio Station) and television in Cairo.

This list has been taken from; 'Abaqiratut-tilawati fil qarnil 'Ishreen', and is according to the Arabic "ABJAD" (أبجد) sequence. It was compiled in 1999.

1. Sheikh Ibrahim Mansoori.
2. Sheikh Ibrahim Sulaiman.
3. Sheikh Ibrahim Jawhari.
4. Sheikh Ibrahim Sha'sha'ee.
5. Sheikh Ibrahim Fat'hullah Iskandari.
6. Sheikh Abul Aynayn Sha'eesha'
7. Sheikh Ahmad Abul Ma'ati.
8. Sheikh Ahmad Abu Talib.
9. Qari Dr. Ahmad Ahmad Na'eena'.
10. Sheikh Ahmad As-Sayyid Al-Baleeti.
11. Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Shahaat Ar-Ruzaiqi.
12. Sheikh Ahmad Hasan Abul Farj.
13. Sheikh Ahmad Hasan Abu Zaid.
14. Sheikh Ahmad Sulaiman Sa'dani.
15. Sheikh Ahmad 'Abdur-Rahman Az-Zari'.
16. Sheikh Ahmad 'Ali 'Abdut-Tawwaab.
17. Qari Ahmad Muhammad 'Aamir.
18. Sheikh Ismail Hilmi Hijaab.
19. Sheikh Ismail Muhammad Qanawi.
20. Sheikh Al-Hasan Muhammad Abdullah.
21. Sheikh As-Saeed AbdusSamad Zanati.
22. Sheikh As-Saeed Muhammad Al-Firaash.
23. Sheikh As-Sayyid Ibrahim Daif.
24. Sheikh As-Sayyid Bayyumi Sawaf.
25. Sheikh As-Sayyid Mitwalli Abdul 'Aal
26. Sheikh Ash-Shahaat Muhammad Anwar.
27. Sheikh Anas Hamoodah Jaad.
28. Sheikh Jum'ah Mukhtar Haamid.

29. Sheikh Haamid Ahmad Salaah
30. Sheikh Hasan Abdul 'Aal Qasim.
31. Sheikh Hasan Muhammad 'Audh.
32. Sheikh Husain Muhamamd 'Audh.
33. Sheikh Husain Muhamamd Az-Zaawi.
34. Sheikh Husain Yusuf Al-Qarnawi.
35. Sheikh Hilmi Abdul-Hamid Jamal.
36. Sheikh Hamdi Mahmood Az-Zaamil.
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53. Sheikh Salaah Abdullah Gamal.
54. Sheikh Salaah Yusuf .Muhmmad.
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59. Sheikh 'Abdut-Tawwab Al-Basatini.
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61. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Al-Basusi.
62. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Haamid 'Ammar.
63. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Al-Fahhaam.
64. Sheikh 'Abdul-Hamid Sakar.
65. Sheikh 'Abdur-Razzaq Al-Jundaali.
66. Sheikh 'Abdur-Rahman Ad-Darwi.
67. Sheikh 'Abdur-Rahman Muhammad Salamah.



68. Sheikh 'Abdur-Rahman Muhammad Duwaidaar.
69. Sheikh 'Abdur-Rauf Shalabi.
70. Sheikh 'Abdus-Samee' Eesa.
71. Sheikh 'Abduz-Zhahir 'Ali As-Sayyid.
72. Sheikh 'Abdul 'Aati Hasan Naasif.
73. Sheikh 'Abdul Aziz Harbi.
74. Sheikh 'Abdul Aziz Khalfullah.
75. Sheikh 'Abdul Aziz 'Ukkashah As-Sayyid.
76. Sheikh 'Abdul Aziz Muhammad Bakri.
77. Sheikh 'Abdul 'Azheem Zaahir.
78. Sheikh 'AbdulFattah Ahmad Abdullah.
79. Sheikh 'AbdulFattah Al-Azhar Shareef-Zuhair.
80. Sheikh 'AbdulFattah Sha'sh'ee.
81. Sheikh 'AbdulFattah At-Tarooti.
82. Sheikh 'Abdullah Sulaiman Shalabi.
83. Sheikh 'Abdullah 'AbdurRazzaq.
84. Sheikh 'Abdul-Mun'im Abul Khair.
85. Sheikh 'Abdul-Mun'im Hasan Abul Azam.
86. Sheikh 'Abdul-Mun'im 'Eesa.
87. Sheikh 'Abdul Wahid Zaki Raadhi.
88. Sheikh 'Abdul Waarith Abdul Aziz.
89. 'Uthmaan Ash-Shabraawi As-Siyaam.
90. 'Uthmaan Abdul Jaleel Hasanain.
91. Sheikh 'Ali Ibrahim Saleem.
92. Sheikh 'Ali Hajjaaj As-Swaisi.
93. Sheikh 'Ali Huzayyin.
94. Sheikh 'Ali Muhammad Al-Zaawi.
95. Sheikh 'Ali Mahmood Al-Husri.
96. Sheikh 'Ali Mahmood 'Ali.
97. Sheikh 'Ali Mahmood Farj.
98. Sheikh 'Awwadh 'Ali Sulaiman.
99. Sheikh 'Audh Hafiz Abu Lailah.
100. Sheikh 'Audheen Muhammad Al-Maghribi.
101. Sheikh Fathi Hasan Maleegi.
102. Sheikh Fathi AbdulHaleem At-Tahhaan.
103. Sheikh Fathi Muhammad al-'Attaar.
104. Sheikh Fathi Muhammad Sulaiman.
105. Sheikh Fathi Muhammad Qindeel.
106. Sheikh Faragullah Mahmood Ash-Shazthali.

107. Sheikh Fauzi Sayyid Muhammad.
108. Sheikh Fauzi Abdul-Ghaffaar Munammad.
109. Sheikh Fuaad Ismail Al-'Uroosi.
110. Sheikh Fuaad Sayyid Muhammad.
111. Sheikh Kamil Yusuf al-Bahtimi.
112. Sheikh Mujaahid Moosa Abu Zaid.
113. Sheikh Muhammad Ibrahim Jaadullah.
114. Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad al-Barbari.
115. Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Basyooni.
116. Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Shabeeb.
117. Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad AbdulHadi.
118. Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Imraan.
119. Sheikh Muhammad As-Sayyid Sa'dani.
120. Sheikh Muhammad As-Sayyid Daif.
121. Sheikh Muhammad As-Saifi.
122. Sheikh Muhammad Badar Husain.
123. Sheikh Muhammad Tafeeq Al-Khudri.
124. Sheikh Muhammad Hasan Naadi.
125. Sheikh Muhammad Hammad.
126. Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad.
- 127. Sheikh Muhammad Siddeeq al-Minshaawi. \***
128. Sheikh Muhammad Salaah Shamsud Deen.
129. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdul-Haleem Salamah.
130. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdul-Hamid Abdullah.
131. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdush-Shafee.
132. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abduz-Zhahir al-Bahraawi.
133. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abduz-Zhahir Mahmood.
134. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdul-Aziz Hassan.
135. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdul-Azheem Ghaazi.
136. Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdul-Hadi al-Halabawi.
137. Sheikh Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab At-Tantawi.
138. Sheikh Muhammad 'Atiyyah Hasab.
139. Sheikh Muhammad Fareed As-Sandiyuni.
140. Sheikh Muhammad Muhammad al-Hilmi.
141. Sheikh Muhammad Muhammad al-Laithi.
142. Sheikh Muhammad Muhammad 'Eid (Kamil Noor).
143. Sheikh Muhammad Muhammad Hulaiyyil.
144. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood al-Boosh.
145. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood at-Tablaawi.



146. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood Buhairi.  
**147. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood Rif'at. \***  
 148. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood 'Usfoor.  
 149. Sheikh Muhammad Mahmood 'Audh.  
 150. Sheikh Muhammad Nasar Jazraawi.  
 151. Sheikh Muhammady Buhairi Abdul-Fattah.  
 152. Sheikh Mahmood Abul Wafa As-Saeedi.  
 153. Sheikh Mahmood Ismail Ash-Shareef.  
 154. Sheikh Mahmood al-Bagirmee 'Azb.  
 155. Sheikh Mahmood Husain Mansoor.  
 156. Sheikh Mahmood Khalil al-Husri.  
 157. Sheikh Mahmood Sa'ad Abdul-Kareem.  
 158. Sheikh Mahmood Siddeeq al-Minshaawi.  
 159. Sheikh Mahmood 'Abdul-Hakam.  
**160. Sheikh Mahmood 'Ali al-Banna. \***  
 161. Sheikh Mahmood Muhammad Ramadaan.  
**162. Sheikh Mustafa Ismail. \***  
 163. Sheikh Mukaawi Mahmood Muhammad.  
 164. Sheikh Mamdooh Abdul-Jaleel 'Ali.  
 165. Sheikh Mansoor Shami ad-Damanhoori.  
 166. Sheikh Haashim Muhammad Heebah.  
 167. Sheikh Waheed as-Saadiq Ayyub. (AbulHasan Ash-Sharqaawi).  
 168. Sheikh Yaseen Hasan Nida.

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محمد بن عبد الله  
 رحمه الله



## ABOUT THIS BOOK

The Qur'ân Majîd, the *Kalâm* of Allâh (سبحانه وتعالى), excels and supersedes all other speech and is unique, miraculous and astounding in every aspect. A distinctive aspect of the Qur'ân Majîd is that it continues to attract, influence and inspire the hearts of men whenever it is recited regardless of the reciter. One can well imagine the effect it has on the hearts when it is recited by a profound Qârî. Undoubtedly, in this era, Allâh (سبحانه وتعالى) has endowed the Qur'ân of Egypt, amongst others, with the ability to recite the Qur'ân Majîd in such melodious and heart-rending tones which captivates the audience and leaves them awestruck. It is the sheer blessing of the Qur'ân that people undertake lengthy journeys to be inspired by a recital of one of these proficient Qârî's. Who has not heard of Shaikh Mustafâ Ismâ'îl, Shaikh Muḥammed Ṣiddîq Manshâvî? Which household is there which does not possess a copy of Shaikh 'Abdul-Bâsit's melodious and captivating recitals? However, who were these Qur'ân and what makes them distinct from the rest?

In this book, the author, Qari Abdullah attempts to answer these question, as well as to introduce the reader to their respective background, upbringing, devotion and sacrifices to the Qur'ân Majîd. By reading this book, the reader will begin to appreciate the tremendous effort and exertion, which a Qârî of the Qur'ân Majîd undergoes to perfect his recitation. Similarly, the reader will be motivated to improve his personal recitation and recite the Qur'ân in the manner it was revealed by Allâh (سبحانه وتعالى).

A wonderful read and a must, not only for prospective Qur'ân but also for those who love, cherish and value the Qur'ân Majîd and whatever is associated with it!